KARL MARX
IN HIS EARLIER WRITINGS

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PREFACE

THIS book is primarily intended to tell the English reader what is contained in the earlier works of Marx, with emphasis on what seemed to throw most light on the man and his systematic thought. Biography and the origin of Marx's ideas enter only incidentally or as the pedestal to my statue. The material of it is taken from the latest and exhaustive edition of the works of Marx and Engels, the *Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, and especially from the first six volumes of Abteilung I, edited by D. Rjazanov and V. Adoratskij, 1927–1932, and the first volume of Abteilung III, edited by D. Rjazanov, 1929. To these volumes I have not felt it necessary to refer in the notes, as it will be easy to see from the text on what passages I am at any time commenting. Nor do the notes represent the extent of my obligations to the secondary authorities who have supplied me with the biographical background or helped to estimate and shape my thought on the subject in general. Out of the enormous bibliography of that subject I give as appendix a very short list of books for further reading.

The Research Grants Committee of the University of Birmingham have generously come to my assistance with a grant towards the expense of publishing this work.

It is, further, impossible to overestimate what I owe to my friend Professor David Baumgardt, from whose advice, and especially his coaching in the philosophy of Hegel, I have derived much of my equipment for the task of interpreting Marx. But for any misconceptions

that may have found their way into the following pages he is not responsible.

If the manner in which the book is written has any merit, that is largely due to my wife.

1940

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CHAPTER I

SCHOOL ESSAYS, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 1835
(AET. 17)

THE champion of the proletariat, the greatest apostle of revolution in the nineteenth century, was born and spent his boyhood in a prosperous middle-class home in one of the quietest of ancient cities. Unless we have recourse to psychological speculations for which there is no support in the existing evidence, it is impossible to say that his Jewish origin had any influence on any part of his life. Jews in the Germany of those years certainly suffered many disqualifications and many a childhood was warped and embittered through religious intolerance. But persecution was religious and not racial. Heinrich Marx, the father of Karl, had, by becoming a member of the state church of Prussia, sheltered his family from the diseases of temperament that infest an atmosphere of hostility or contempt, of injuries openly or secretly resented. His character and circumstances ensured for his son a home in which, although there was no exceptional stimulus or tragic inspiration like those which favoured the genius of the young Mazzini, there was a fostering warmth of intellectual and social encouragement and freedom.

In joining the Prussian church Heinrich Marx incurred no very serious confessional responsibility. The church had admitted the full tide of rationalism, which accorded completely with his own outlook. He was thoroughly familiar with the principal French writers of the eighteenth century and devoted to the study of Kant. Liberal in his

political as in his religious tendencies, he was yet reconciled to the rule of Prussia from bitter remembrance of the military dictatorship of Napoleon. Though public spirited and not devoid of civil courage he was neither quixotic nor revolutionary. He was made for the life he actually lived as a lawyer of official standing, doing his work with conspicuous integrity in the courts of the sleepy old Roman and ecclesiastical city of Trier, discussing philosophy in the Kantian group of which he was a leading member, watching with anxious affection over the studies of the son in whom he hoped his own intellectual and professional ambitions would be realized.

The schooldays of Karl Marx fell in one of the worst periods of political reaction in German history. During the years from 1830 to 1835 when he was a pupil in the principal grammar-school of Trier, university students were being sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, the press was stifled by a ubiquitous censorship and spies infested coffee-houses and lecture-rooms. But a generation of Prussian schoolmasters had grown up under liberal influences, and, as the memoirs of Bismarck testify, their work was not without fruit. Karl was fortunate. The atmosphere of his school was one of freedom and active discussion. The head master, a friend of his father, was a member of the Kantian society and other masters were in the black books of the secret police, whilst the general standard of scholarship was high, as the answers and essays which are the earliest writings we possess of Karl Marx, those of his examination on leaving school, enable us to judge.

In mathematics, although he was reported as having a sound knowledge, he did not excel. The Latin essay and

the translations from Greek into German and from German into French showed a very fair knowledge of those languages. He showed, however, here already, one of the most remarkable characteristics of his mind, its logical vigour and intensity of concentration, since his chief merit lay in his penetration of the meaning of difficult passages, especially where the difficulties arose rather from the thought than from the style.

Two essays in German enable us to form a very probable estimate of the boy's opinions and throw light on the influences by which he had been surrounded. One is on the considerations of a youth in choosing an occupation. It is written entirely in a spirit of cosmopolitan idealism, as far from selfish ambition on the one hand as it is on the other from narrower loyalties to king and fatherland. The ground tone is duty to mankind. The aim imposed by Deity is the ennoblement of one's self and of humanity. The choice of means to this end rests with the individual, who has not been left without a guide, the inmost voice of the heart, which speaks quietly but unerringly. We may, however, mistake its meaning. What we feel to be the divinely indicated purpose may be an illusion born of inflamed imagination and excited feeling. The greatness of the object arouses a reasonless ambition under whose impulses not the man himself but chance and false appearance make the choice. With the best intentions inexperience may assume a task beyond its powers. Who can advise? "The parents who have preceded us along the path of life and have already tested the sternness of Fate; such is the cry of the heart."

But even after we have duly compared our abilities with a worthy task we cannot always get the position to

which we feel ourselves called. And here comes the sentence which Mehring hailed as the first glimmer of Marxian socialism. "Our social relations have to some extent already commenced before we are in a position to determine them."

When all due caution has been used we should choose the task of greatest dignity open to us, the one of greatest human nobility, a work in which we are not the passive tool of others but act independently in our own circle. The doctrine of perfectibility, our own and humanity's, runs through the whole essay. The most dangerous occupations for those whose convictions are not yet firm are the professions engaged rather with abstract truths than with practical activity; but they are the noblest for those men whose enthusiasm is profound, who are ready to offer up life itself for an idea. "If we have chosen the position in which we can effect the most good for mankind, no burdens will oppress us, because they are sacrifices for all; we then enjoy no narrow egoistic delight, but our happiness belongs to millions, our deeds live on, perennially beneficent, and our ashes will be moistened by the hot tears of noble men." Such is the peroration of this essay of youth, which to the examiner seemed rich in thoughts and well arranged but not free from the writer's habitual fault of seeking out unusual and picturesque phraseology.

There is also an essay on religion, on the subject of "the union of the faithful with Christ according to John xv. 1–14, in its ground and its essence, in its unconditioned necessity and its effects." The grounds are found in human nature, from that of the savage, who tries anxiously to avert the anger of supernatural beings, up

to Plato, the greatest of ancient thinkers, yearning towards a higher Being whose appearance would fulfil the aspiration towards truth and light. In every one of us "the alluring voice of sin is heard above the enthusiasm for virtue . . . the low struggle for earthly goods frustrates the effort after knowledge." The final and most weighty proof of the need for union with Christ is found in the words of Christ himself, nowhere more beautifully expressed than in the parable of the vine.

Passing rather lightly and vaguely over the "essence" of the union, its "effects" are found to be such as human virtue and wisdom unaided, have been unable to attain, gratitude towards God and a genuine love of men through love of Christ. Virtue ceases to be the "gloomy caricature" the Stoics made of it or the "child of a stern doctrine of duty" as it was among all the nations of the heathen. "Who should not gladly endure sorrows, when he knows that through his continuing in Christ, through his works God is honoured?" No heathen philosophy has attained the great aim of thus "beautifully shaping and elevating human life."

This essay, too, the examiner found rich in thought, and this time the style was praised. But certain defects were noticed. The "essence" of the union in question was not given at all, its "ground" only one-sidedly conceived, its "necessity" shown but imperfectly. We have in this essay, in all probability, less a rendering of what Karl had been taught in school than a glimpse into the philosophical Christianity in which the baptized Jew brought up his children. The most remarkable omission is that of any reference to a belief in the immortality of the soul. It is absent even from an eloquent description

of the confidence enjoyed by a Christian after his union with Christ. The superiority of Christian to any former ethics is however emphasized. Finally, this essay on union with Christ is in complete accord with the essay on the choice of an occupation. Philanthropic moral idealism is the basis of both; other-worldly considerations enter into neither. With the pietist influences that overshadowed the youth of Engels, Marx did not come into contact.

Marx at the time of leaving school was not in revolt against his surroundings or against society. His conduct at school was reported good. Between himself and his father there was complete confidence. Nor was he the only one of the pupils who showed an appreciation of the liberal atmosphere of the school. That he afterwards became so notable a revolutionary was not due to any early embitterment or oppression. It was rather due to an early experience of freedom, an early vision of rich possibilities.

CHAPTER II

POETRY, JURISPRUDENCE AND HEGEL

In 1835 Marx entered the university of Bonn. He starts with the resolve, in harmony with his juvenile essays, of doing something worth while. He attends nine courses of lectures, which his father considered too many. He is also rather too good a customer of the booksellers. Heinrich Marx thinks it a waste of money to buy many books, especially great works on history. Had Karl been guided by parental advice, he would have confined himself almost entirely to the study of law, taken great care of his health and cultivated useful acquaintances. But he did none of these things. Not that he shirked his professional study. But he combined it with philosophy, history and literature, in all of which he showed much more interest. He was not only excessive in study but also in such things as the consumption of tobacco, coffee and wine. Altogether he gets through too much money, partly from his facility in giving it away. Once he incurs an academic penalty for making a noise at night and being drunk. He fights a duel. At the end of his year in Bonn his father not only consents to his migration to the university of Berlin, but particularly desires it.

On his departure from Bonn, the authorities reported of him that, apart from the little disorder mentioned above, he had been a good student, and that he had had no connection with forbidden secret societies. Karl Marx was not yet, it seems, interested in politics. He did not come under the dark shadow of those years in which the

Prussian and other governments, influenced by Metternich and still apprehensive from the revolutions of 1831, appeared intent on extinguishing every spark of political freedom. In 1836 a hundred and ninety-two students were convicted of belonging to prohibited societies and some were condemned to death. Though these capital sentences were not executed, the terms of imprisonment to which they were commuted were at first thirty and then eight years.[1] But Karl Marx belonged to a poet's club and a tavern club and enjoyed, so far as we know, the whole of his first year in a Prussian university.

Poetry was for some time a serious matter with him. If the poetic laurel was within reach of his hand, was not this the worthiest ambition as well as the most pleasant occupation? For a while it seemed attainable. Heinrich Marx was not unsympathetic. He discussed serious plans seriously and gave advice, though of a rather worldly and prosaic sort, as to such matters as the choice of a subject. He was gratified that Karl submitted his earliest poems to his criticism. He takes it all the more kindly because he himself could never make a tolerable verse "even in the sweet days of first love."

For Karl, too, these days were now approaching. During the summer vacation of 1836 he became secretly engaged to Jenny von Westphalen, an event which appeared to Heinrich Marx happy in all respects except that he was embarrassed as participant in the secret, since he felt the Westphalens might regard the match as disadvantageous for them. But his fears in the end proved groundless, for Jenny's father, a distinguished official with a strong interest in Homer and Shakespeare, had a great liking for Karl.

[1] This and subsequent references refer to the notes on p. 215.

The state of mind in which Karl Marx went to Berlin is described in a letter he wrote to his father more than a year later. "When I left you a new world had come into my existence, that of love, and at first indeed of a hopeless love, drunken with longing. Even the journey to Berlin, which in other circumstances would have delighted me extremely, exciting me to the observation of nature and kindling the joy of life, left me cold, indeed put me into a remarkably bad humour, for the rocks which I saw were not more rugged, more insurgent than the emotions of my soul, the wide cities not livelier than my blood, the inn-tables not more overladen, more indigestible than the bundle of fantasies I carried, nor, finally, was art so beautiful as Jenny.

"Arrived in Berlin, I broke every existing connection, paid few and reluctant visits and tried to bury myself in science and art.

"My state of mind being what it was, lyrical poetry was my first resort, at least it was the pleasantest and lay nearest. But, as a result of my situation and whole previous development, it was purely idealistic."

Jenny received a bookful of manuscript poems before Christmas 1836, and Heinrich Marx another on his birthday in 1837. This last alone has survived. It includes, besides some three dozen lyrics, a few scenes towards a drama and a few chapters from a humorous romance. The lyrics have no value as poetry but considerable biographical interest. They afford certain testimony that among the roots of Marxism was romanticism. They show an intense regard for the claims of emotion, of intensity of living, a contempt for comfortable, philistine routine. They defy reality and rule. They have all the faults as

well as the aspirations of the romantic. They are filled with forlorn maidens and luckless knights, with spirits of the mountain and the flood; there is a poem of creation with chaos chaotically depicted; echoes there are of the folksongs which the writer was at the time collecting, and traces of more sensitiveness to nature, especially to flowers and light, than the young versifier was able to express. There is a most dynamic vocabulary, a rushing and spraying and flashing and dashing of things. After writing in a couple of years a vast quantity of such verses, Marx concluded, rather suddenly it would seem, that his way did not lie here. He himself wrote the epitaph and last judgment on his own Muse. "My heaven, my art," he confessed, "became just such a distant Beyond as my love. All reality dissolves, all boundaries are lost, the present is attacked, feeling is wide and formless, there is no truth to nature, all is built of moonshine, is the complete opposite of what exists or ought to exist, rhetorical reflections in the place of poetic thoughts." The poems he sent to his father had brought him within sight, as he said, of "the realm of true poetry, which gleamed like a distant palace of the fairies." Alas, across a stream unfordable by him. "All my creations collapsed into nothingness." He resolutely sacrificed his youthful ambition without losing his interest in poetry. He was or became familiar with the classics of various lands, and later, in Paris, he would spend hours helping his fellow exile Heine to get the last perfection in a line or stanza. He had feeling, imagination and power over language, but not just that power which gives the poetic synthesis.

One element lacking to him as yet was certainly literary self-restraint. This appears still more to be the case in the

fragment of a drama called *Oulanem*, in which violence of incident vies with the violence of the imagery. The vehemence of temperament which earned Marx among his friends at Berlin the title of the "wild creature from Trier," which drove him to his furious bouts of study, which caused one who heard him speak during the revolutions of 1848 to remark his biting and contemptuous manner, "the way he almost spat the word bourgeois," all this was not the divine afflatus of Apollo. As time went on he became far more patient in correcting and recasting. He worked on the first volume of *Capital* until he had made it a masterpiece both as regards form and reasoning.

In the humorous prose chapters of "Scorpion and Felix" the influence of Sterne is very obvious, but in the place of Sterne's delicacy there is a too frequent and inconsequent recourse to calculated bathos. Many a gibe at contemporary philistines, academic and other, can be found, together with a certain amount of ridicule of Hegel, whom Marx had recently begun to study.

Seriously as he took his poetry he cannot have spent a great part of his time upon it. We are well acquainted with the course of his studies during his first year at Berlin from a letter he wrote to his father in November 1837. In his first semester the only lectures he attended were those on the Pandects, criminal law and anthropology. But he endeavoured in his reading to embrace a sufficient range of subjects to enable him to write within a few months a complete philosophy of law. His first reading was done, he says, "quite uncritically and as if at school." He read "Heineccius, Thibaut and the sources." He translated Tacitus' *Germania*, as well as part of the *Tristia* of Ovid. His miscellaneous reading

included Lessing's *Laocoon*, Solger's *Erwin*, Winckelmann's *History of Art*, Kleim's *Criminal Law* and his *Annals*, and much of the latest literature of the day. He read like Gibbon "pen in hand," filling his note-book with excerpts.

The first philosophical influence in his life was that of Kant, modified by Fichte, and this influence presided over his ambitious attempt to construct a philosophy of law. Nothing remains of the essay but its table of contents and the following account of it which the young theorist wrote in the November letter already mentioned. "By way of introduction I prefixed a few metaphysical propositions, and continued this unlucky work as far as 'Public Law,' a work of nearly three hundred sheets. Before all things I experienced here the disturbing influence of that opposition between what is and what should be which is the special characteristic of idealism, and it produced the following wrong and unhelpful distribution of the subject-matter. First came what I had graciously christened as the metaphysic of law, that is to say, principles, reflections, definitions, separated from all actual law and from every actual form of law, as is the case in Fichte, only with me it was more modern and more empty.

". . . The second part was the philosophy of law itself . . . according to the opinion I then had of how the development of ideas in positive Roman law should be regarded. As if positive law in the unfolding of its ideas—I do not mean its purely finite determinations—could be anything whatever but the formative activity of the concept of law, which ought to have been included in the first part of my work." By treating the form

separately from the matter he had obtained "no real form but a writing-desk containing a number of drawers in which I afterwards strewed sand."

"In these various occupations of the first semester I had sat up through many nights, fought through many a hard struggle, been forced to undergo much excitement from within and without, and at the end of it all was but little the richer for it, had neglected nature, art and the world, had repulsed friends; all these reflections my body seemed to make, and a doctor advised me to go into the country." So he went to Stralow where he quickly recovered his energy. And here he no longer shut himself away from social intercourse. In consequence he made the acquaintance of a group of men in the forefront of contemporary controversy, his spiritual allies for some years to come.

"Through various meetings with friends in Stralow, I came into a doctor-club." In this club he found the strongest stimulus towards what he felt was his most pressing task, the reconsideration of his philosophy. Most if not all of his new companions could be vaguely described as belonging to the Hegelians. Hegel had died some six years earlier, bequeathing to his pupils the intellectual hegemony of Germany. A system which wove all knowledge into a vast logical texture as the expression of universal mind seemed the natural culmination of all idealistic metaphysics, and at the same time a decisive victory of idealism.

Marx had already become acquainted with this philosophy in fragments. "Its grotesque melody of the grottoes," as in those days he called it when he was writing poems about sirens, did not allure him. But finding that

his own masters, Kant and Fichte, had not enabled him to apply philosophical ideas to jurisprudence—"my holy of holies was rent apart and new gods must be set up in it"—he felt summoned once more "to plunge into that sea, but with a definite purpose of finding spiritual nature as necessary, concrete and complete as bodily nature." Among the verses of 1837 is an epigram in which he makes Hegel say: "Kant and Fichte were fond of flying off into the upper air, seeking there a distant land; I only try valiantly to understand what I find on the roadway." But to common sense Hegel is certainly obscure and, as Marx said, "grotesque." Was this apparent explanation of the whole universe and of every part of it more than a system of words? In another epigram of the same collection Hegel is made to confess: "I tell you everything because what I tell you is a non-entity."

With his new resolve to study Hegel again, and in continual discussion now with men of Hegelian vocabulary, he set to work with his accustomed impatience. "During the time when I was unwell I made the acquaintance of Hegel from beginning to end as well as of most of his pupils." Now as later, Marx's favourite device for clarifying his ideas was original composition. "I wrote a dialogue of twenty-four sheets: 'Kleanthes, or concerning philosophy's point of departure and necessary progress.' Here art and knowledge were in a measure combined." It was intended as "a philosophic-dialectic development of deity, in its manifestations as a concept of potentiality, as religion, as nature and as history." He felt in himself a strong resistance to the acceptance of Hegel. But the plan of the ambitious little dialogue as above outlined almost forced him to think on Hegelian lines. He started

from Hegel's immediate predecessors, Kant and Fichte, and he set out to do what Hegel had done. It is therefore not surprising to read: "My last sentence was the beginning of the Hegelian system; and this work, for which I had made myself more or less acquainted with natural science, with Schelling and with history, this work over which I had racked my brains without end, which is so confusedly written, whereas it should properly have been a new logic, that I can hardly think my way back into it, this my dearest offspring, by moonlight begotten, thrusts me like a false siren upon the foeman's weapon. For vexation during several days, I absolutely could not think." Then he plunged for a time again into his juristic studies, read Savigny, Anselm Feuerbach and Grolmann, but also Bacon *de Augmentis Scientiarum* and Reimarus on the artistic impulse in animals, and translated parts of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.

But he did not resume his practice of seclusion. Though he did not pay the prudent visits recommended by his father, he became very intimate with the members of the doctor-club. The two men with whom he seems to have been most closely connected were Rutenberg and Bruno Bauer. Rutenberg was a teacher of geography who had suffered a spell of imprisonment and was still kept under observation by the police. He was ten years older than Marx, who once referred to him as his nearest friend. A far more important influence, however, was that of Bruno Bauer, soon to be one of the greatest theological or anti-theological notorieties of Germany, inferior only to Strauss and Feuerbach. The group included several remarkable men, but none of them individually affected Marx's life so much as did Bauer. The discussions of the

club were free and lively. "Here in conflict many contrary opinions came out," wrote Marx to his father, "and I became ever more firmly enchained to the present world-philosophy." Marx himself took no mean place in this company. One of its most distinguished members, the historian Köppen, called him a "warehouse of ideas, a manufactory of them," and congratulated himself when Marx had gone, since he could again have ideas of his own.

In November 1837 he wrote the letter from which almost all our knowledge of this first year at Berlin is derived. Though a certain boyish floridity and exuberance still linger in the style, the letter is no mean piece of autobiography. The elder Marx was not altogether pleased, however, with the tenor of life revealed by these confidences. He was far from approving so disinterested a pursuit of philosophic truth by a young man engaged to a woman of higher social standing than his own, a woman still more remarkable for graces of mind and person. On this account, and on account of various extravagances and negligences, the letters of Heinrich Marx, who was failing in health, became more and more taken up with remonstrance. His nature was affectionate, but he had much regard for proprieties and formalities. A torn letter or an informal address pained him. Moreover he realized that in Karl there was what he called a Faust-like spirit with something hard in it that caused him misgiving. He died in the spring of 1838. If he had seriously feared any real failure of regard on the part of his son, he was deceived. The offending letter itself showed undiminished confidence. Of all the memories of early life, his was the one which Karl Marx most persistently cherished.

CHAPTER III

THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

THE giants of German philosophy and poetry, Hegel and Goethe, had passed from the scene in 1831 and 1832. The spirit of the time underwent a change. The watchword of "Young Germany" was emancipation, moral, intellectual and political. From Paris, where the followers of St. Simon were experimenting most unconventionally with life, and whence the exile Heine, the greatest remaining German poet, was sending romantic verse barbed with irony and prose letters full of criticism, whence also Börne was urging his countrymen towards a sterner liberalism, came the influences of the opening age of Enfantin, Lamennais and Georges Sand. This movement in life and letters received a rough check with the imprisonment of Gutzkow for his free-thinking novel in 1835, the year in which Karl Marx went to the university of Bonn.

But in the same year the spirit of innovation appeared in the theological sphere with the publication of Strauss's *Life of Jesus*. The story told by the evangelists was an application of the messianic myth of the Jewish nation. The uncompromising enunciation of this theory opened a decade of controversy, in which Hegelian philosophers were as keenly participant as theologians. Bruno Bauer was both, as was Strauss himself. If Christianity was to be treated as one of the stages in which Absolute Spirit unfolded itself historically, and concepts were the essence of the matter here as in all things, miracles and the historic Jesus were only true as concepts.

The Hegelian school was, however, in process of breaking up. Two main streams began to diverge. The conservative, or right wing of the movement tended, as Hegel had done, to emphasize the rationality of existing institutions. But Hegel's system of thought comprised a possibility of revolutionary developments. If history is the logical, progressive unfolding of absolute reason, all that exists must be incessantly superseded. Bruno Bauer, so long as he remained at Berlin, was in the main an adherent of the older Hegelian school, and, so long as the minister Altenstein presided over affairs of education and religion in Prussia, this Hegelianism of the right had almost official recognition. Bauer went to Bonn in 1839 under such auspices, with a licence to teach theology in the university and with every prospect of academic promotion.

From the time when Marx became associated with the members of the doctor club in 1837 until Bauer's departure for Bonn two years later, their relations were intimate. For all his controversial pugnacity and arrogance, Bruno Bauer was the most amiable of companions. The same vivacity that made him a favourite of children showed itself among his philosophical friends. But at Bonn the atmosphere was uncongenial. Academic society there consisted of dry specialists and cautious philistines. A club of professors met at nine and separated at eleven. They chatted and made a few jokes. "There is plenty of amusement here," runs a letter to Marx, "what men call laughter, but no more such laughter as we had together when we crossed the streets in Berlin!" And the intellectual interests that had given value to the club at Berlin were here quite wanting. Bonn appeared to Bruno Bauer the university

of all Germany that was least intellectually productive. He wanted Marx to come to Bonn. He had plans of co-operation there. Marx must get through quickly with all the bother and stupidity of examinations, obtain a doctorate as soon and as easily as might be, and come to lecture at Bonn. Bauer had considerably changed his own point of view. He was now about as far to the left as Hegelianism extended. "At Berlin," he wrote, "I did not admit to myself, or only admitted to myself under stress of conflict, how much would have to go." His interpretation of the gospels was more revolutionary than was that of Strauss. They were not even so much as the religious myth of Judaism. They emanated from the imaginations of individuals, originally of Mark and then of Luke and Matthew who adapted them to the needs and struggles of the Christian congregations under the Roman empire and then shaped them as literature. At the same time the Absolute Spirit of Hegel was transformed into the human "Self-consciousness." Bruno Bauer had come to the conclusion that Christianity was ripe for a complete transformation at the hands of philosophy. "The catastrophe," he wrote, "will be fearful and very great, and I would almost say greater and more tremendous than that with which Christianity came into the world."

Marx commenced working on his dissertation for the doctorate in 1839, and finished it in the spring of 1841. The subject of it was the *Difference between the Democritic and Epicurean philosophies of Nature*. The opening for a treatment of this subject in the light of modern German ways of thinking was afforded by the fact that Hegel, in his *History of Philosophy*, seemed to him to have dealt somewhat cursorily with the later Greek thinkers, and

accordingly Epicurus much more than Democritus is discussed by Marx, who may further have been guided in his choice of a theme by his friend Köppen's interest in the same period.

That theme at least he had profoundly considered. He felt its high historical import. The current impression that Greek philosophy, like a bad tragedy, had come to a tame ending, it is his first care to remove. Not only were the later forms of Greek thought the forms in which the Greek spirit passed into the world of Rome, the archetypes of the Roman mind. Their originality and intensity gives them a significance for modern times. They are above all no mere anti-climax after Plato and Aristotle. They take up and develope themes propounded by the earliest Greek thinkers and subsequently neglected. Moreover, between them, the three great closing phases, Epicurianism, Stoicism and scepticism comprise all the elements of the Self-consciousness; and as the final embodiment of *Sophia* they exemplify the unity of a philosophical cycle that commenced with the seven sages. From this point of view Marx intended to write on them. But, so considered, they would require a large treatise. In the meantime he offers a preliminary contribution on the differences between Democritus and Epicurus.

Epicurus in particular has received very scanty appreciation, almost as if he had merely produced an inferior version of the work of Democritus. Authors both ancient and modern, from Cicero to Liebniz, are quoted in illustration of this prejudice. Granted, however, that Epicurus and Democritus both had a doctrine of atoms and the void, how, inquires Marx, are we to account for the extreme divergence of their theories of knowledge?

Democritus is credited with two contradictory accounts of the nature of truth. It is hidden, lies at the bottom of a well, we don't really know anything. Elsewhere he says that the truth is what appears, all that appears; it lies in our immediate perceptions. This inconsistency arises from a failure to develope dialectically the hypothesis of the atoms. This hypothesis involves a contradiction that ought to be faced and solved. Democritus tries to suppress it. The contradiction is this. On the one hand atoms, with their containing void, are ultimate, elemental reality. But though reason must assume them, they are not accessible to our perceptions; they, the whole of reality, are unknowable, and Truth abides in her well. The atoms being beyond our ken, we have, as the object of perception, phenomena. Appearance is taken as all we can know. This line of thought leads Democritus to the assertion that truth lies in our immediate perception. He has thus two opposed philosophies. A contradiction in theory is not of itself to a Hegelian like Marx a reason for rejecting the theory. But the contradiction must be developed, the synthesis found. Democritus, instead, suppresses now the one and now the other of his two opposed assumptions. When he thinks of the inaccessible atom he says truth is unknowable. But he was as a man of science one of the most indefatigable observers and one of the most learned men of antiquity. He travels throughout the world collecting and ordering knowledge of facts. The Egyptian priests teach him geometry and in Persia he sits at the feet of the Chaldees. But he has no satisfactory philosophical basis for his science. The atom, the truth, was not brought into any relation with what he knew. The unresolved contradiction remained in his mind though

it was suppressed in his researches. His science was therefore unsatisfying, like Faust's. The unrest which drove him across the world, some said as far as the gymnosophists of India, came from the depths of his mind where the undeveloped concept of the atom lay festering.

Epicurus, on the other hand, fulfils all the requirements of Hegelian dialectic. He accepts the contradictions latent in the concept of the atom and gives them their speculative development. Like Democritus he teaches that the visible universe results from the movement of innumerable atoms. But he does not, as Democritus does, leave the atom behind in its unknowability whilst he proceeds on the path of science. He carries it with him through all the contradictions it leads to.

The first contradiction is between the atom conceived as or represented by a geometrical point and the atom in the simplest conceivable movement, the opposition between the point and the straight line. Conceived as falling vertically through space the atom as point becomes atom as line, something not itself. In Hegelian language it is said to be *aufgehoben*, which means three processes in one. It is abolished, maintained and raised to a higher significance. Hegelian speculation requires that the point as thesis and the line as antithesis shall be combined in a synthesis in which our atom, by the negation of its own negation, becomes itself again with a new meaning. In solving this first contradiction, which, like all dialectical contradictions, is merely a contradiction in a Hegelian sense and not in strict logic, Epicurus propounds a doctrine for which he has been severely criticized because misunderstood, his famous deflection of the atoms from a straight line. The straight line contradicts the point not

merely because it is a point in the state of being not a point, but also because the straight line represents regularity and therefore lack of freedom. The atom has, by moving in a straight line, lost its freedom, and so ceased to be itself, has become contradicted or negated. The deflection from the straight line represents caprice. A moving atom that deflects itself from the vertical direction is a synthesis of atom and movement, of point and line.

At this early stage Epicurus thus introduces us to the source of his inspiration and the purpose of his thought, freedom. His aim is not to reveal the world as a complex of great, iron, everlasting laws. His universe is not to be compared with that of Newton or Laplace. It is rather that of William Blake, who has the same quarrel with Newtonian science, the same will to transcend the evidence of the senses. Epicurus set out not to collect information and frame laws, but to overcome information and destroy the subjection to law. If he derived anything from Aristotle it was his conception of felicity human or divine as consisting in *ataraxia*, in being unmoved. To be above hope and fear man must cease to believe in the inexorable necessity of the laws of nature. He must be raised above

> "The long monotonies of joy and pain
> That bind men to the circle of the Earth."

Man must not fear death. He must feel the indifference of one who has escaped from Fate:

> Nil igitur mors est, ad nos neque pertinet hilum.

The deflection of the atom from its regular fall is to be explained by the principle of indetermination. Marx uses the term "real possibility" to indicate what can happen

according to the laws of nature, "abstract possibility" to mean abstract, unlimited freedom of thought of the subject in dealing with objects, giving indeterminateness to phenomena, with the freedom of the spirit shining through and actuating all. The gods, too, of Epicurus, so often regarded as equivalent to none at all, are the supreme expression of this principle. "And these gods," writes Marx, "have actually existed. They are the gods of Greek plastic art." And here he quotes Aristotle: "That which is the Best has no need of action but is itself the end."

The third movement of the atom is repulsion. It is not enough for the atom to be free and independent within itself alone, to carry its inner contradiction without disturbance to its equanimity. If it is to create a universe it must realize itself positively and therefore have relation to something external. But, since it must not lose its freedom by being bound up with anything not itself, we are faced again with a "contradiction." The problem is solved through the external relations of the atom being relations with other atoms. They are external to the individual atom. But they are, after all, atoms, and relations with them do not compromise the autonomy of the atomic essence. The relations between atoms are expressed in the third movement, whose name, repulsion, is made to cover not only mutual exclusion, repulsion in the narrower sense, but also attraction, as distinguished from the mere impact resulting from deflection; it includes as well differentiation. The scientific value of this theory is found in its means of escape from the eternal regress of causality; it makes the free atom the sufficient cause of everything.

The chapter on the movements of the atom is followed by one on its qualities. It is contrary to the essence or

concept of atoms, as the completely simple and unchangeable ground-stuff and elementary form of being, that they should have different qualities. But in an actual universe we cannot conceive them without qualities. Their essence and their existence thus, in a Hegelian sense, contradict each other. Marx has to have qualities that are somehow not qualities. He finds the qualities to be there but self-annihilating. They contradict, not each other, but themselves. So new contradictions are brought in to get rid of the old one, or rather to solve it by maintaining and transcending it.

The three qualities of an atom are size, shape and weight. The size of an atom contradicts itself because it consists in absolute littleness, that is to say in no size at all. Shape, too, with a little more ingenuity, disposes of itself likewise. Epicurus considers there is not an infinite number of different shapes of atoms, though there is an infinite number of atoms. But however many shapes there may be, if the number of atoms is infinite, there must be an infinite number of atoms of each shape. Each atom is therefore indistinguishable in shape from an infinite number of other atoms. But to be indistinguishable is not to have shape. So the shape of the atoms is not shape.

But most important is it for the third quality, weight, to evaporate. "For," says Marx, "it is in its centre of gravity that matter possesses its ideal individuality. . . . So that if atoms are placed in the perceptible world they must have weight." But gravity implies for matter an ideal point outside the portion of matter itself. But the atom is individuality having itself entirely to itself. As a quality of the atoms of which matter is composed, weight

is a contradiction of the nature of the atom and must be negated, must be itself involved in self-contradiction. The self-contradiction is achieved thus: Atoms have their ideal individuality and therefore differ in weight. But their habitation is the void, in which all things of whatever weight fall with the same velocity, as Epicurus himself recognized, anticipating the teaching of modern physics. So the difference in weight is no difference. The last quality of atoms is disarmed. The difficulty of reconciling the essence of atoms with their existence arose in part from the qualities, and that difficulty is now removed. The atom as principle and the atom as element have been revealed as one and the same atom. The atom with qualities is only the aspect under which the atom in itself becomes "estranged from its concept" to form the world of Nature, and this estrangement accounts for the fact that the natural world is in a perpetual process of dissolution and re-birth. The principle of the void, as represented by the free atom, "free from existence but not free in existence," is eternally contending in a unity with the atom as matter possessed of qualities and composing the sensible, existent universe.

In the chapter on time we reach a concept in which the atom becomes conscious, time being the inner sense, the very form of all consciousness. The atom, when it became the basis of the actual world, lost the absoluteness it had in its purely conceptual character. But it recovers this as time. "Thus the individual self-consciousness steps from her concealment and confronts Nature in the independence she has just attained." According to the Epicurean theory of knowledge, we perceive things through their material emanations, which are simply

atomic matter; they become conscious on reaching the percipient, in becoming part, that is, of a conscious being.

Nature's independence is expressed most effectively, most oppressively, in the heavenly bodies. There, if anywhere, we see the laws of Nature in operation. How is the atom as time, as consciousness, to confront and overcome the equally autonomous and unimplorable stars, the symbols of the free spirit's greatest foe, physical necessity? It is not enough to be free from religion. We must be free from science. Epicurus, and indeed earlier thinkers, had shown that the planets were not gods but merely collections of atoms. But how shake off the inexorable laws, which are the first, the "naïve" form in which reason embodies itself in phenomena? Here we reach the ultimate crisis of the dialectical progress, and here Epicurus–Marx recurs to the fundamental doctrine of "abstract possibility," which is nothing short of the dogmatic assertion that whatever is could be otherwise. The human mind, armed with this Medusa-shield of its own self-consciousness in which Nature's independence is reflected and overcome, thus vindicates its own absolute freedom and security. The victory makes us equal to the gods.

Such is Marx's vindication of the philosophical interest, for a modern thinker, of the doctrines of Epicurus, or, as he termed it, his "development of the Epicurean philosophy and the dialectic immanent in it." It is easy to see that his Hegelianism, so reluctantly adopted in 1837, has by 1841 entered on the first stage of a dissolution which was, perhaps, never quite completed. He has become a Hegelian of the left, what is called a young-Hegelian. The Absolute has been exchanged for the

Self-consciousness. The absolute spirit is now for Marx as for Bauer the free self-consciousness of mankind. The influence of Fichte, whom Marx had studied before he underwent his Hegelian crisis, perhaps contributed its share towards that sense of the claims of the will and the subject (ego), confronting all the powers of the universe, which gives to the dissertation on Epicurus its Promethean, humanistic tone. A letter of Bruno Bauer counsels him earnestly to sacrifice a preface in which the Aeschylean line expressing Prometheus' hatred of all the gods is quoted as the proper utterance of philosophy. It is the philosophical counterpart of the romanticism of his poems. The same spirit was to prevent his acquiescence in a system of society in which man is subordinated to money.

But whilst he thus gave utterance to one of his dominant requirements, the same essay reveals another, the need to unify thought with life; or rather not the essay itself so much as one of the preliminary sketches towards it. The claims on philosophy of the practical and the actual would not allow Marx to rest in a philosophy of pure subjectivism. In his school essay he had announced the welfare of humanity to be the aim of all worthy striving, and in his abortive attempt at a philosophy of law he had discovered his dissatisfaction with any system which did not embody the ideas in the facts. This attempt had been made in the earliest stage of his struggle with Hegel, and what drove him into the arms of Hegel was the hope of identifying thought with reality. In the preparatory fragment to which allusion has been made Marx deals more particularly with the relation between thought and action, philosophy and the world. It is headed *Nodal points in*

the development of philosophy, and parts of the substance of it are brought out more clearly in a note to a lost part of the dissertation.[2] There have been times when philosophy seems to have completed its theoretical task, to have accounted for the universe in a comprehensive system of thought. The world is then clearly divided between this completed theory and actuality. Such was the situation after Aristotle and again after Hegel. The result of the completion of thought is the awakening of will; thought demands to be realized. Marx has here his own contemporaries in mind. He sees them divided into two groups. The one party, which he calls liberal, realizes that the world fails to correspond to the idea to which they would fain hold fast. The attitude of this party is therefore one of criticism, and their endeavour must be to change the world. Bringing philosophy into the realm of action they change its character. It becomes for the time the opposite of philosophy. Their attempt to free the world from its unphilosophical state leads to their own liberation from their closed philosophical system and the result is real progress. The other party hold fast not to this idea but to the actual world. They seek, therefore, not to change the world but philosophy. Their starting-point and basis being the non-conceptual, this group, the so-called positive school, in continuing to philosophize, arrive at fantastic nonsense, in other words at the philosophy of the later Schelling, the philosophy of irrationalism in the service of reaction.

How Marx thought the world must be changed is not at all clearly indicated, but he attributes to the party of which he approves the intention to change it by criticism. Their action itself is criticism. This was precisely the

action of Bruno Bauer. It is not necessary to suppose that Marx considered action ought to be confined to criticism, although the divergence between Marx and Bauer clearly shows itself only after Marx had become deeply involved in practical life as the editor of a great newspaper.[3] But the very fact that Marx wrote these notes on the relation between philosophy and the reform of the world shows his practical bias, since this subject was not necessarily involved in the interpretation of Epicurus. The problem for Epicurus was a problem of individuals in relation to themselves. Given a universe pretty well summed up and accounted for in the culminating triumph of a speculative philosophy, as the universe of the Greeks was in the philosophy of Aristotle and the universe of the Germans in that of Hegel, how was the human soul to find itself in all this, how comport and sustain itself? The Epicureans said one thing, the Stoics another, the sceptics yet another. It was only his sense of the parallel between the post-Aristotelian and the post-Hegelian situations which could have occasioned Marx to write the passages about changing the world, a programme peculiar to the moderns, and only his sympathy with this programme.

In several of these preliminary fragments, the writer clearly reveals his own philosophical predilections. He is himself capable of very subtle analysis and is fond, if not over-fond of it. What he intended to lecture on at Bonn was logic, and he had in mind to open his way by an attack upon Trendelenberg's interpretation of Aristotle. But he was equally moved by the appeal of philosophy to the imagination. He is less attracted to Plato, in whose religious philosophy he finds ecstasy to be the culminating

symbol, than by those he calls the more intensive philosophers, and these he exemplifies by Aristotle, Spinoza and Hegel, all of whom, we may add, think consistently in terms of immanence. Their enthusiasm is less emotional but stronger, more satisfying to a mind whose culture is universal; it kindles to a purer flame of science. Such is Aristotle's eulogy of the highest contemplation, Spinoza's contemplation *sub specie aeternitatis*, and Hegel's magnificent conception of the organism of universal mind. In ethics he is again attracted by Spinoza, and quotes "Blessedness is not the reward of virtue but is virtue itself."

He defends Epicurus against the criticism of Plutarch. Analysing Plutarch's conceptions of God and immortality, he finds in them nothing intelligible except what Epicurus himself taught. Stripped of delusive wrappings Plutarch's god is nothing but abstract individuality and his immortality is reduced to the pure potentiality of atomic being. Not that Plutarch draws these conclusions. He is too unctuous, has too little courage and philosophic insight. Marx pictures Plutarch as a timidly buttoned-up individual, anxious about the post-mortem continuance of his petty ego, in contrast with the great Epicurean Lucretius, the bold, poetic lord of the world. Plutarch is worried at the prospect that death will rob the virtuous of their reward, whilst Lucretius in the thunder of his great song shows us eternity full of life. The contrast is between one who is for going on to everlasting in his own skin and a thinker who builds a universe out of his own resources. "The first requisite for philosophizing is a free and fearless mind."

CHAPTER IV

THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

At length Marx was free. His dissertation was sent on April 6, 1841, to Jena, where degrees were granted more easily than in Berlin, and the diploma bears the date of April 15th. He could now join Bruno Bauer in Bonn. Bauer's last letter, the one counselling prudence in the matter of the Promethean preface, is dated April 12th. Once seated in an academic chair Marx will be able to say all he likes. In the meantime he must not make the future harder for himself and for his future wife, of whom Bauer writes that she is capable of undergoing all things with him—"and who knows what is yet to come?"

These last letters to Marx in Berlin are full of zest for the coming conflict. The friends are to start a periodical together. Bauer is already scandalizing Bonn with his lectures on the New Testament. Marx is preparing something on logic. In particular it will fall to him to demolish the revived Aristotelianism of Trendelenberg, to whom there is a contemptuous reference in one of the preparatory sketches for the dissertation. After a couple of months in Trier Marx settled in Bonn in July. Before the year was out Bauer published anonymously a provocative little book in which Marx collaborated, *The Trumpet of the Last Judgment over Hegel the Atheist and Antichrist.* It professes to be written by a shocked pietist alarmed at Hegel's influence. The presumed writer deplores the virtual adoption of Hegelianism by official Prussia, and shows that Hegel's own works contained all the errors

which the government was penalizing in the Hegelians of the left. One after another his enormities are exposed. His treatment of deity as mere universal spirit, ultimately nothing but the Self-consciousness, is a conception that undermines everything and ultimately itself. Has not Hegel praised the atomistic philosophy for getting rid of the myth of creation, and Descartes for making philosophy independent of theology, and even Spinoza the pantheist? Is not Hegel the greatest of revolutionaries, for whom all that exists exists only to be superseded? Moreover, he is unpatriotic. He prefers French to German writers, and precisely for that preference of the rational to the actual, which constitutes their revolutionary quality in church and state. He is always sneering at the pedantry and passivity of the German, who performs all his actions under his famous old nightcap in a world of dreams. Does he not attack the Christian virtue of humility as an inner arrogance and self-satisfaction? He piles blasphemy on blasphemy, calls the state of innocence the animal state, the Fall "the eternal myth of mankind." In the arts "man produces the divine out of himself," and "the Christian idea of Christianity is a mental picture formed in a fundamentally insane period." Certainly Hegel adopts the doctrine of the Trinity, but a little examination shows that he means something very unorthodox. With his basic idea of reason no dogmas or institutions can remain stable. The whole of this trumpet-blast was so interspersed with scriptural ejaculations that for a little while the illusion of pietistic authorship was maintained. But not for long; on other grounds as well the authorities at Berlin, especially the new king and Altenstein's successor Eichhorn, had marked down Bruno Bauer for dismissal.

This blow fell in March, 1842, but some months earlier a new enterprise had been launched which was soon to engage the best energies of Marx and to set him upon lines which estranged him from Bauer and from most of his Berlin friends. Frederic William IV on his accession in June, 1840, inherited a dispute with the Roman Catholic hierarchy on the subject of mixed marriages, and the principal newspaper of the Rhineland, the Cologne Gazette, was under Roman Catholic control. There was therefore a good opportunity for a group of liberals in Cologne, with governmental favour, to start a rival journal.

The Rhenish province was the most progressive part of the Prussian kingdom. French revolutionary occupation had left a legacy both of civil liberties and of economic enterprise, and though the former had been deeply violated under the military tyranny of Napoleon, the new class of industrial magnates was imbued with a spirit of liberalism and a determination to develop the resources of the country. They were progressive likewise in intellectual matters, admirers in general of the France of Louis Philippe and advocates of the freedom of the press. Some of them went further. Mevissen, though a powerful capitalist, cherished humanitarian aspirations acquired from a study of St. Simon. Jung and Oppenheim listened to the enthusiastic socialism of Moses Hess.

This romantic personage, six years older than Marx, a pioneer at once of communism and Zionism, spoiled by a rabbinical education for a commercial career, a learned Spinozist, a visionary and an agitator, first saw Marx in September, 1841, and received an overwhelming impression. He thought him the only real living philosopher, a thinker not only in advance of Strauss but also of

Feuerbach. Marx was for him a combination of Rousseau, Voltaire, Holbach, Lessing, Heine and Hegel. He wrote with enthusiasm of an unrealized project of Bauer, Marx and Feuerbach to start an atheistic journal, and of Marx as a desperate revolutionary. This last expression was as yet scarcely accurate unless we confine it to theological applications, though Marx no doubt expressed radical opinions with violence. Theology and philosophy were the spheres in which open opposition to the existing order made its first real progress in Germany after the abortive movements following the French revolution of July, 1830. Opposition in the political field was now about to revive.[4] The new Cologne newspaper, however, the Rhenish Gazette, owing to circumstances already mentioned, did not commence as a paper of opposition, though its liberal backers and writers, and none of them more than Marx, rapidly brought it into conflict with the government at Berlin. The Prussian bureaucracy blocked many paths, from that of religious and social revolutionaries to that of an advocate of railways and national unity like the famous economist Friedrich List, whom the magnates at Cologne wanted as their first editor. But List, who was ill, recommended his pupil Höffken. Höffken remained only a few weeks, and the influence of Marx was already strong enough, early in 1842, to procure the succession for Rutenberg, his friend of the doctor-club.

Marx's first contribution to political journalism was not written for the Rhenish Gazette, but was brought out in Switzerland by Arnold Ruge. Ruge, who was sixteen years older than Marx, and had early suffered five years in a fortress for his adhesion to the liberal movement

in the universities, had since devoted himself to the propagation of the Hegelian philosophy. He conceived Hegelianism as the culmination of the rationalism of the eighteenth century. His aims were essentially those of intellectualist and middle-class emancipation. He was Voltairean, secularist and, at this period of his life, cosmopolitan and Francophile. As editor of the Halle Year-books he was the standard-bearer of the philosophical vanguard, leading with a judicious editorial courage the efforts of diverse characters in the cause of progress. When in the spring of 1841 the new rulers at Berlin suppressed his paper, he transferred operations to Saxony and began to issue the German Year-books in Leipzic. For him Karl Marx wrote his first political article, and as it appeared to be rather too strong for the Saxon censorship it was reserved for publication, early in 1843, in *Anecdota*, a collection of essays by Feuerbach, Bruno Bauer and others which Ruge produced in Switzerland. It was an attack on the Prussian censorship.

Frederic William IV was bent on reviving the splendours of a medieval kingdom in so far as a protestant king might be able to do so. Though he did not easily digest opposition, which made him irritable and unjust, he wished his relation to his subjects to be paternal rather than despotic. He issued an admonition to the censors of the press instructing them to allow more freedom in certain directions than of late had been customary. He wished them to take more notice of the spirit than of the letter of compositions submitted to their examination. The basis of the censorial system remained indeed the edict provisionally issued by his father in 1819. But the

censors were to interpret it according to the new king's recognition of "the value of a frank and loyal publicity."

Marx subjected this instruction of January, 1842, to minute criticism. It would be tedious to follow the young aspirant to a chair of logic through every analysis of the text which he worried and unwound. He made much of the fact that the censors had presumably for long been exceeding their duty and of the responsibility for this excess. But the main drift of his argument is the simple one that legal safeguards should be precise and leave as little as possible to official discretion. What appears like wanton hair-splitting on the part of the critic is often due to a lawyer's just sense of the danger of loopholes and implications. Frederic William IV was rich in the unction of benevolence, plausible in the appeal for confidence and loyalty, speciously covering the removal of definite safeguards whilst he made the livelihood of the whole class of writers dependent upon the "tact," as the instruction words it, of the censor.

The king tells the censors to hinder no serious and modest investigation of the truth. The admissibility of what is said depends upon the style of it being serious and modest. It is a subjective standard. It may even be a false one. A genuine style is determined by the personality of the writer and the nature of the subject. In no other style can the truth be told. With regard to the subjects allowed for treatment the instruction allows the censor—"he can, he is not obliged," points out Marx—to permit a candid review of internal affairs. But this permission is to be restricted by a clause of the old edict forbidding the presentation in a favourable light of any party in any land working for the overthrow of the

constitution. But not even Chinese or Turkish affairs can be "candidly," though they might be "modestly and seriously," discussed under such a condition.

Where they touch religion the edict and the instruction differ in a way significant of the change of times. The edict of 1819 had protected the general principles of religion as distinguished from the doctrines and opinions of parties and sects. The instruction of 1842 forbade "frivolous and hostile" treatment of the Christian religion or any Christian dogma. The words "frivolous and hostile," argues Marx, are very cunningly selected. A frivolous attack is one that does not touch the essence of the matter. Any other attack is hostile to the essence. So no attack at all is to be allowed. The function of the two adjectives is simply, with the appearance of referring to exceptions, to mask the prohibition of even the most reasonable controversy.

But, though philosophy is thus enchained, the religious press is not, as might have been expected, set free. The edict, consistently with the rationalism of 1819, had forbidden the fanatical use of religious principles in politics. But the Christian-Germanic state of 1842 had made Christianity the basis of its polity, and this state included both protestants and catholics. A specifically protestant state must condemn catholicism. A protestant state attempting to maintain Christianity in general must either decide from its protestant standpoint what doctrines are essential to Christianity or it must treat its own specific doctrines as unessential, and so to do is heretical. The word "fanatical" receives the same treatment as the words "modest and serious" or "frivolous and hostile." It is misplaced and misleading. Religion, not the censor, is

capable of declaring any application of a dogma to be fanatical.

In its treatment of morality the instruction is more Christian-Germanic than was the edict which, forbidding any attack on morality, had treated morality as the principle of good conduct. The instruction of 1842 lays all the emphasis on decency of outward customs, rejecting the possibility of a fundamental morality independent of religion. The champions of an autonomous morality—Spinoza, Kant and Fichte—are implicitly condemned as irreligious.

But the instruction is most insidious in ostensible concessions. Criticism of the government is allowed if its wording is decent and its tendency well meaning. The censor must have sufficient insight and goodwill to distinguish between a malicious and a well-meaning tendency. The government, through the censor, in all laws of tendency and laws of suspicion, assumes itself to be in exclusive possession of political reason and assumes a contrary disposition in the subject. Laws of tendency are anti-political, since they identify the state with a party, branding in advance whole schools of thought as prohibited and so stifling the reason of the community. In thus setting itself against the mind of the citizens the state is setting out to commit the very crime it pretends to punish. Underlying much of this part of Marx's argument, but not explicitly mentioned, is Rousseau's philosophy of the general will.

One of the tendencies to be most rigidly repressed is the tendency to excite suspicion against classes of society or individuals. "And in the same breath the censor has been told to divide the whole people into the two classes

of suspected and unsuspected classes and groups." The press at least represented universality by presenting everything for public judgment, whilst the censor gives effect to his suspicions in the secrecy of his office. The instruction which is to protect religion violates the most general principle of all religion, the sacredness of personal conviction.

The argument thus passes from a criticism of the king's instruction to an attack on censorship in general. Censorship is incompatible with the very essence of law, with publicity and universality. It involves the deepest inconsistencies. The censor is to suppress evil rumours and scandal, but he relies continually on the reports of scandalmongers and of secret and malicious tale-bearers. The censorship is to foster a regard for law, but is itself an organ of caprice and deprives society of the benefit of law. It claims to promote "modesty," but it assumes the presumptuous function of spying out the heart and of judging summarily in the vast spheres of philosophy, theology and politics. The height of presumption is thus reached in claiming for individual men the perfections of total mankind. Confidence is ordained while mistrust is given the force of law. Such confidence is shown in the state that its working is entrusted to weak mortals, individuals with impossible tasks. But no, its insecurity is felt to be so great that the opinions of private persons are dangerous, and the press is treated as a private person. The critic's office requires him to be impersonal, but impersonality in its essence, that is the power of ideas, is suspected to be full of personal malice. If there is to be suspicion it is surely more reasonable to suspect the secret critic who has power to suppress than the public

critic who writes in the papers. Whatever is in itself evil remains evil, and is none the better for being imposed by government as the necessary means of bringing forth good in the governed. This very un-Machiavellian opinion of Marx is worth noticing. His political and ethical principles as shown in this essay are those of a believer in absolute standards of morality, in the sacredness of the rights of the individual and in the inalienable sovereignty of the people in so far as sovereignty is not in conflict with those rights. But "I only come under the law when I act." The state only exists in the world of deeds, and thought is not subject to it. The end does not justify evil means nor does political authority turn wrong into right. A sound condition of the public mind cannot be induced by measures that reduce freedom. "So," says Marx, "Sancho Panza, that he might be fitter for his tasks, had his meals taken away." Maladies of the press should be left to the natural inner cure that freedom brings; the censor can but amputate.

Though this essay on the censorship was itself a victim of censorship, or of Ruge's fear of it, and had to wait a year for publication, and that in a foreign country, Marx contributed a series of articles to the Rhenish Gazette in May, 1842, on the same subject. The occasion was given by the assembly of the provincial estates of the Rhineland at the beginning of the new reign. Every province of Prussia witnessed such a meeting and a breath of political debate passed over that bureaucratic realm. Hope was awakened that the late monarch's unhonoured promise of representative government was to be at length fulfilled by his successor. Such hopes were cherished particularly in East Prussia, where the memory of Kant was still a

liberal influence, and on the Rhine. Much public attention was focused upon the assemblage at Cologne, and in criticizing its debates on the freedom of the press Marx was addressing himself to all that was politically alive in Germany.

He selected for discussion the arguments of a representative of each of the four estates—the princes, the knights, the towns and the peasants. In each case he attributed the speaker's views in part to the influences and the traditions of class. It was princely prejudice that traced all merits in the German press to the existing restrictions, and that justified censorship by the authority that imposed it. Marx was completely unseduced by such argument. If the existence of a censorship was a confutation of freedom, then the judges of Galileo had confuted the movement of the earth, and civil liberty was confuted by the existence of serfdom in the Middle Ages. The time of strictest censorship in Germany, the period from 1819 to 1830, had been, Marx pointed out, the time when the press was poorest and most servile. The princely orator, however, cherished deep prejudice against the press and he showed it by a question-begging assumption that every good thing existed in spite of the press and every evil because of it. In England, he said, the press had been harmless because of English traditions. The Dutch press was condemned for not preventing the financial troubles and the revolt of Belgium. In Switzerland political controversy was so uncourtly and uncouth that, for instance, party names were derived from the animal kingdom. It was the fault of the press. Marx refutes each argument with elaborate logic and sometimes with equally elaborate satire, but the interest of his reply lies in his contention

that the press is everywhere expressive of a people's mind and spirit and is naturally tinged with national qualities. What is important for him is that the mind and spirit of a people does in fact need the means of expressing itself, and that all sorts of shuffling pretexts were being put up to hide this fundamental claim, unless indeed it was one of which a member of the order of princes had no natural sense.

The estates were discussing at the same time the question of publishing their debates. The speaker for the knights dealt with this aspect of the subject first. He demanded that publicity should be at the discretion of the estates themselves. Marx puts the question whether the estates belong to the province or the province to the estates. If they are there to represent the will of the province, the province should be able to know if they did so. Mystery for mystery, if there was to be government behind closed doors, Marx preferred the mystery of the bureaucrats to that of the landed nobility and gentry, monarchy without an assembly of estates to monarchy with one. At least the monarch and his officials would have more impartiality, would represent the whole nation with more approach to universality of outlook than the representatives of the orders. "A truly political assembly thrives only under the protectorate of the public mind." The essence of government by law is universality and publicity. Private sessions and censorship are both the very opposites of the rule of law.

Like Milton and like Rousseau, Marx identifies liberty with reason and with the very essence of humanity. But he likewise emphasized the ripeness of the claim. The noble knight, in rejecting it on the ground of human

imperfection, was requiring a perpetual tutelage of the people. And if imperfection is of the essence of humanity, the rulers too must be imperfect. *Quis custodiet?* "If all are to be in swaddling clothes who shall swaddle us?" An idealistic optimism, or at least meliorism, pervades these articles. Reality is rational and good. When the knight argues that a bad press would, if both were free, have an advantage over wholesome papers through the gullibility and bad passions of the public, Marx found the argument equivalent to calling the bad press the good one. That reason would not ultimately prevail was to Marx, at this period of his life, perhaps always, a self-contradictory proposition. This is his version of the philosophy he had derived from Hegel. It was what he had gone to Hegel to find, a unity of the ideal and the real. It was not to disappear, even from his materialist theory of history, in which economic necessity brings about the final salvation of man and the proletarian revolution is the triumph of the idea of humanity. Though Marx was not yet a socialist, his earliest writings are the key to his ultimate system, whose philosophical presuppositions, however, he never fully formulated. In these essays on the press he neither fully states nor attempts to prove his philosophy of reason. Mostly occupied with polemic as the years went on, and more and more with history, he leaves it still a matter of speculation what was the exact relation between his empiricism and his dialectic, and how far he had himself thought it out.

After his detailed criticism of the knight, Marx proceeds to deal with the representative of the towns. He finds here much less to discuss. The worthy burgher was afraid of bad influences in the press and of restlessness

in public life, and he pointed to France where there were many troubles and the press was free. Finding nothing to waste words on in these apprehensions of one who was rather a *bourgeois* than a *citoyen*, Marx allows himself a humorous thrust at the lethargic obscurantism they imply. "When first the cosmological discovery was made that the Earth is a *mobile perpetuum*, many a peaceful German took tight hold of his night-cap and sighed over the continually changing state of the motherland; a terrifying uncertainty about the future made him unhappy at living in a house which every moment stands on its head." The bourgeois speaker represents the indecision of his class, divided between a desire for independence and a timid prudence. He illustrates the psychology of petty interests.

Some speakers had defended the freedom of the press though for the most part on wrong or inadequate grounds. There was one who had claimed freedom for writing and printing as a form of industrial freedom, and with special precedence as an occupation of man's higher faculties. This does not satisfy Marx. He certainly sees in it a sound feeling for reality in contrast to the airy theories that elevate liberty into something too good for this world. It is, after all, akin to Rembrandt's impulse to paint the Virgin Mary as a peasant girl. But it did not suit a philosophy for which the freedom of every form of life is its essence or formative idea. The essence of a man's writing is that it be something more than his means of livelihood. He does not claim freedom of the press on the ground of his right to earn, but for its own sake. The writer who regards his work as a means and not as an end is unworthy of his occupation. The same speaker had

suggested that the gild system should be applied to the press, and a certification of fitness required of everyone engaging in the occupation of writing. But who should select the authors? Would Ptolemy have admitted Copernicus, or Bernard of Clairvaux Luther? Was it not the unauthorized writers who had made their country's literature? To prefer the others would be to accept Gottsched and reject Lessing. To put authors into a gild would be to recognize liberties, in the sense of privileges, and refuse liberty. Liberties, said Voltaire, are privileges and exemptions presupposing general servitude. Marx was far more pleased with a speech by one of the representatives of the peasantry, who grounded his defence of the press on the general principle of progress and on the importance of changing the laws to suit the growing needs and capacities of a people.

These articles on the speeches in the Rhenish assembly of estates show the earliest written form of Marx's political thought. It is radical democratic idealism, equally far from Burke and from Machiavelli. The idea, reason, freedom are fundamental reality, the state is their manifestation and law is the expression of the general will. No order of nobles or squires, bureaucrats or clergy can claim to monopolize or mediate the rights which are inherent in the humanity of every human being. Nor can any end be a good one that requires evil means for its fulfilment. "Reason of State" is thus unequivocally rejected. Lies and oppression are the negation of the very reason and freedom of which every human community should be the expression and realization.

These articles of Marx led to a brief skirmish with a rival paper. The Cologne Gazette, in opposition to which

the Rhenish Gazette had been started, published an attack on them. This paper was in opposition to the government's ecclesiastical policy and represented both the liberalism and the catholicism of the Rhineland. To strike at the Rhenish Gazette without appearing to sacrifice liberal principles required ingenuity. The freedom of the press had to be ostensibly defended, but the Hegelian guns had to be silenced. The line taken was to accuse the censor. His failure to suppress Marx's articles was a malicious trick for reducing the freedom of the press to an absurdity. To support this charge the principle was laid down that religion and philosophy were not fit subjects for journalism.

Marx replied in July to what he called this attempt to out-censor the censor. His opponent had made various claims on behalf of religion, and in particular of the Christian church. Religion, even in its lowest form as fetish-worship, had restrained sensual desire, and throughout history religion had been the principal factor in the highest forms of civilization. It was for religion to set bounds to science, though scientific discoveries confirmed religious dogma, and, finally, religion was the basis of the state. Marx denies all these assertions. Fetish-worship was before all things the religion of man's animal desires. The highest periods of ancient civilization were the periods of Socrates, Aristotle, Lucretius and Lucian, the great critics of the ancient religion. So far from the decay of that religion causing the decline of the ancient states, the Greek and Roman religions consisted in their nationality, with whose dissolution they inevitably disappeared. As against the claim that the legitimate bounds of science are set by religion, Marx answers that the question how

far science can go is a scientific question. If scientific discoveries support Christianity, why have all the great thinkers, including even Leibniz, even the pious Malebranche, been attacked by the theologians? Has not science as such been attacked in the classic motto of Tertullian, *Verum est quia absurdum est*?

To the rule, if it be such, that Christianity is the basis of every modern state, the Prussian and French constitutions at least are exceptions, based as they were on the secular philosophy of the eighteenth century. The writer in the Cologne Gazette had assumed that the state's control over the individual was essentially the relation of an educator to a child. We merely pass into the wider school. Not thus does Marx conceive the state. Its educative character belongs to it as the embodiment of reason, changing private into universal aims, transmuting natural independence into spiritual freedom, crude impulse into moral disposition, identifying the individual with the life of the whole.

This philosophy of the state settles the question whether philosophy and religion should be discussed in newspapers. Politics is not an offshoot of religion, but has its own independent philosophical basis. Marx maintains this to be the view even of the church, from Augustine onward. When he and the other church fathers mention the "Christian state" they are thinking not of the state but of the church. The true Christian state is the Hildebrandine church. The separation of church and state is therefore called for from both sides, and the state is the embodiment of human reason. To bar the political press from treating of philosophy is to stifle it as a political press.

CHAPTER V

ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

BEFORE the articles on the freedom of the press and the answer to the Cologne Gazette were printed, the prospect of co-operation between Marx and Bauer in Bonn had been destroyed by the action of the Prussian government. In March, 1842, Bruno Bauer was suspended from teaching. Marx had begun to read widely on the history of religious art with the intention of collaborating in a sequel to the *Trumpet of the Last Judgment*, but the project was abandoned. What Marx wrote on this subject has disappeared. He had spent much time in the Westphalen house at Trier during the last illness of Jenny's father, with whom he was on terms of close intimacy and to whom as his "dear, fatherly friend" he had dedicated his work on Epicurus. Ludwig von Westphalen died in March, and Marx, after some changes of residence, settled in October in Cologne, where the Rhenish Gazette began to monopolize his time. Rutenberg proved to be incapable of the conduct of an important paper, and from the 15th October Marx himself was the principal editor.

He had written for it in August an article attacking the historical school of jurisprudence in the person of Gustav Hugo. This school had risen into a position of political influence with the recent entry of Savigny into the ministry. Hugo professed to be applying to his subject the principles of Kant. Marx was easily able to show by a series of quotations that Hugo's work was really based on no ethical principles at all, that, in so far as this work

represented the historical school, the actual existence of an institution was, for the historical jurists, its only and complete justification, and that Hugo was most especially at home as an apologist for such practices as polygamy and slavery.

On the day after Marx assumed editorial control he published his first article on communism. It was an answer to a leading Augsburg paper which had accused the Rhenish Gazette of coquetry with that social menace. Whatever ground existed for this attack was on the responsibility of Moses Hess, who had conducted the paper during the interregnum between Rutenberg and Marx. As early as in May, Hess had published an article on governmental centralization in which he said that, in the ideal state, the mind of the individual being identical with that of the community, government could have no place. Theoretically as well as practically, he declared, this was the right solution. Marx was far from agreeing with such an application of the doctrine of the general will. He commenced a reply, which, however, he did not finish. It balances his criticism of the historical jurists. Having condemned Hugo for justifying every institution on the ground of its mere existence, he found Hess to be wrong in taking as the basis of political right a purely imaginary ideal. The fragment is very brief and the answer to Hess is in its last paragraph. "The author of the article," writes Marx, "begins with a self-criticism of his question. Considered from a higher standpoint it does not exist, but we learn at the same time that from this high standpoint all laws, positive institutions, the central power of the state and finally the state itself disappears. Justly does the writer acclaim the 'astonishing ease' with

which this point of view is able to get its orientation, but it is wrong to call such a solution 'theoretically quite correct, indeed the only right one,' and wrong also to call this standpoint a philosophical one. Philosophy must in all seriousness protest when it is confused with imagination. The fiction of a people of 'the just' is as foreign to philosophy as the fiction of praying hyenas is foreign to nature. The author substitutes for philosophy his own abstractions."

Another article of Hess, published on the 11th of September, after examining the state of German parties, insisted on the social character of the problems of the future. England, at least, had reached a stage at which political liberalism had no adequate solution for the problem of poverty; Germany had yet time to consider the problem before it became urgent.

At about the same time the Rhenish Gazette reported a learned conference at Strassburg, where somebody had said: "The middle class is to-day in the position occupied by the nobility in the year 1789; then the middle class laid claim to the privileges of the nobility and obtained them; to-day the class which possesses nothing desires to share the wealth of the middle classes who now govern. The middle class has to-day made better preparations against a sudden attack than were made by the nobles in '89, and it is to be expected that the problem will be solved peaceably."

This report, together with an article on the dwellings of the Berlin poor, which appeared in the Rhenish Gazette on September 30th, provoked the attack from Augsburg. Marx had thus, immediately after he became chief editor, to take public notice for the first time of communism.

On the movement itself he refrained from giving any opinion. On the necessity of discussing it he takes a firm stand. A system of thought represented by some of the ablest writers in France was worthy of attention, and its problems were not to be solved by a conspiracy of silence. He claims that the attitude of his paper is, on this question, purely critical. He was speaking not only for his paper but for himself. What he wrote represented precisely his own position. He had not yet studied socialism but he intended to study it, and it was during the next few months that he devoured the great mass of contemporary socialistic literature, particularly the French writers. During the same period a number of the principal persons interested in the Rhenish Gazette formed themselves, almost certainly under the guidance of Moses Hess, into a group for the study of the social aspect of politics. Hess was as yet the only decided communist among them. He had published, in 1837, perhaps the first German communist book. He had reached before Marx the position that philosophy must be transmuted into action.

Marx did not announce any adherence to communistic opinions during the winter in which he controlled the Rhenish Gazette, and he probably had not any such conversion to announce. But the articles of these months show him dealing with social and economic subjects on a basis of contemporary fact which saved his new investigations from being purely speculative. His first writings dealing with actual social conditions were a criticism of debates in the Rhenish estates on the law relating to the theft of wood.

By immemorial custom the dead wood fallen from trees

in the forest belonged to the persons who picked it up, and the peasantry relied on it for fuel. By a singularly ungenerous combination of the rationalistic simplification of property which characterized the revolutionary era with the revived feudalism of the reaction, it was now proposed to make the collection of dry twigs an offence on the same level with the mutilation of living trees. The forest-owner's paid servant, the keeper, was not merely to have his word taken for the fact; he was to assess the amount of damage. At the same time he was no longer to be appointed for life, and had therefore no claim to be regarded as an independent official with any means of being impartial as between his employer and the accused. To crown these injustices with a robbery of the public, the forest-owner was to receive not only compensation for the wood but the fine due to the state, so that he made a profit on the transaction. If the offender was too poor to pay a fine, the punishment was imprisonment on a diet of bread and water. To protest against such an accumulation of iniquities it was not necessary to be a communist, and Marx made energetic protest in October, 1842, in the first long series of articles he wrote in his new editorial capacity.

He had as yet no quarrel with the institution of private property. But the arbitrary transmutation of the ancient, common, customary rights of the poor into the private property of the already rich and powerful was a usurpation, a clear injustice. That the attempt on the part of the poor to continue the exercise of this right should be treated not as a misdemeanour but as a crime was an aggravation of harshness. But the provisions regarding the forest-keeper were not merely a robbery of the poor,

not merely economic in character. They were a concession of governmental powers, of political authority, to the forest owner, a combination of the persons of plaintiff and judge in one individual. By a series of quotations from speeches made in the debate it was easy to show that the landholders were consulting purely their own convenience in establishing their private interest as law. The falsity of any theory of government which, based on the idea of the representation of classes, assumes that a predominant class will govern in the interests of a whole people was once more exposed. It was not without consequences to the development of his own doctrines that Marx, at the commencement of his serious study of socialism, should have his mind impressed by the importance of class. He was well prepared for such an impression. Equality before the law was a principle as strongly maintained by Hegel as by Rousseau, and formed part of Marx's political creed from the beginning. This much is clear from his first writings on the freedom of the press.

In the whole argument of Marx there is a strong reliance on the principle of natural right. To collect dry wood, dead twigs separated from the living forest by Nature herself, was, he argued, not merely a customary right of the peasants of the Rhineland; it was a natural right of the poor in all lands in every age. Such wood belonged to a class of objects that could never become private property. Marx clearly does not believe in the right of the state to an unlimited sphere of action or legislation. We have seen that freedom of opinion was, in his view, sacred from the interference of external authority. In his discussion of a new divorce law, he lays it down that the legislator does not make or invent the laws but merely

formulates them, expresses the inner laws of spiritual relations in conscious, positive enactments. Marx never made a god of the state. He arrived a few years later at the conclusion that the state is merely the means by which a ruling class maintains its ascendancy, and that in a world without class the state would disappear. But in this article on the theft of wood he insists on the rights of the state as well as on those of the individual. The state has rights which it has no right to alienate. "And even if we allow the state to give up its rights, to commit suicide, at least the repudiation of its duties remains a neglect and a crime. The owner of the forest can as little receive from the state the private right to the public duty of punishing as he can possess any such imaginable right to that function in and for himself."

It is possible in these articles to observe the germ of another Marxian conception. In the course of his studies on the history of religion and religious art Marx appears to have been particularly interested in fetishism. Allusions to it frequently crop up in his writings from this time onwards, until it ultimately became a central metaphor in his theory regarding capitalism. In the last article on the forest question it is already used with effect: "The savages of Cuba thought that gold was the fetish of the Spaniards. They instituted a festival for it, sang round it and threw it into the sea. If the savages of Cuba had been present at the sittings of the Rhenish estates, would they not have taken wood to be the fetish of the Rhinelands?"

The idealistic philosophy at the basis of Marx's early theory of the state is further revealed in a short essay on changes in the law of divorce. Condemning the existing

divorce laws of the Rhineland as an inconsistent combination of religious and civil conceptions of marriage, and those of Prussia as a mere patchwork of expedients, he inquires what is the essence, the idea, of marriage, and finds it to be the family. He is therefore strongly opposed to easy divorce. If no children were involved, however, the dissolution of a marriage would no more concern the state than would the dissolution of a friendship. It is true, he admits, that a relation does not always correspond to its idea, and when the divergence reaches a certain degree the relation is dead. The state should dissolve a marriage when it has lost its moral significance. But indulgence of the caprice of individuals constitutes a harsh violation of the essence and moral reason of those very individuals in so far as that essence and reason are involved in moral relations.

The early political doctrine of Marx is, then, that the state should embody the moral will of the people, but that there are important spheres of life with which the state should not meddle. The boundary of the state's proper authority is not exactly defined by the distinction between public and private affairs. The state has duties in regard to marriage; it has no right to suppress the public discussion of religion, philosophy and politics. One short series of articles deals more directly with the political constitution. A proposal had been made to form permanent committees from the various provincial diets of Prussia. These committees were to have been combined into a makeshift for a central representative assembly, a farcical fulfilment of the old royal promise. The Augsburg Gazette defended the committees and the system of estates in general on the ground that the separate repre-

sentation of classes corresponded to the organic nature of the state. Marx accepted the organic nature of the state, but in the system of estates he saw nothing that represented the existing Prussian reality. In the modern state the organs were quite different. The activities of the modern political organism had become grouped around various local, military, administrative and judicial institutions which had no relation to the distinction between the medieval orders of the old society. To separate the orders in representation was like separating the elements of a chemical compound and calling the result organic, placing them side by side and treating them as equivalent to the original compound. The Augsburg writer had muddled his argument by treating the composition of the committees before he determined their function. Marx, who knew his Aristotle, pointed out the illogical character of this method and went on to show, what his study of the laws on the theft of wood had amply illustrated to him, that whereas the purpose of representative institutions should be the realization of the whole people's will, the actual purpose and self-assumed function of each of the separate orders was its own separate interest as a class. Marx was far from having arrived at his ultimate belief regarding the historical solution of the opposition between classes. He did not yet consider it impossible to arrive at egalitarian political institutions without fighting through the whole antagonism of classes over the whole sphere of economic, social and political existence.

So far from seeing the essence of society as a struggle between classes, he saw it as the organism represented by the state. The separate interest of a class he treated as an anomaly to be abolished in the name of popular

sovereignty and not yet as the ground of a conflict to be developed until it found its dialectical conclusion. The article concludes, like the series on wood-theft, with a vindication of the spiritual nature of the state against the fetish of property. "In a true state there is no landed property, no industry, no gross matter, which in their condition of raw elements could make a bargain with the state; there are only spiritual powers, and only in their resurrection in the state, their political re-birth, are the natural powers qualified for the franchise of the state. The state pervades the whole nature with spiritual nerves, and at every point it must be apparent that not matter but form, not nature without the state but the nature of the state, not the unfree thing but the free man dominates."

In January, 1843, Marx developed his knowledge of social conditions, and his theory respecting them, in the course of a series of articles which he wrote in justification of a correspondent from the vine-growing district of the Moselle. The vine-growers had been reduced to distress through the customs-union of 1834, which exposed them to the competition of other German districts. An official investigation resulted only in suggestions that showed the state once more to be "the coldest of all cold monsters." The vine-growers should take to other occupations; the practice of creating smallholdings should cease; the natural economic process would eliminate the smaller people and bring ultimately its own remedy. The utmost the government could offer was an alleviation of taxes. A correspondent from the afflicted region had been censored and Marx took his part in a number of articles at the beginning of 1843.

In these he is at closer grips with the social problem than in his articles on wood-theft. It is no longer a question of defending peasants against the revival of feudal injustice, but of investigating the disastrous consequences of free competition. Though he was at this time studying communism, he had not yet become a communist. None the less he felt acutely the distress of the peasants and was indignant at their being left to the relentless play of economic forces. The underlying assumption of all the articles is that the government should in some way come to their aid. But the gist of the argument is that, with government by bureaucracy and a censored press, no remedy is to be expected.

His criticism of bureaucracy is a very interesting essay in political psychology. It shows the strengthening of the writer's feeling for the way in which individuals in their thought and action are carried along on streams and involvements of class, function and tradition which they can neither control nor resist. The individuals who compose the bureaucracy cannot escape this law. The official who reports on a local problem has either been in touch with it formerly or he has not, that is to say he has either preconceived views in favour of existing policy or inadequate knowledge of circumstances. In particular a local official is apt to assume that an inquiry into the welfare of his own district is an inquiry into his own efficiency, industry or integrity. If he admits anything amiss he will seek an explanation outside the machinery of administration. His superiors, the central officials, will necessarily have more confidence in his expert knowledge than in that of private persons. A bureaucracy has its traditions, its records, its own vision of the social and

economic structure. These constitute an official reality distinct from the actual reality. Such a government cannot quickly alter its principles to suit some new local situation. Its views are very hard to change. In the hierarchic system of promotions a man's immediate superior, to whom he is responsible and by whom he is directed, is nearly always his immediate predecessor who was the author of the state of things with which he is dealing. The higher officials tend to identify the bureaucracy with the state and to treat the people as its passive object. Marx does not blame individual officials. He explicitly states that their mode of action no more depends on their will than does their mode of breathing. Having thus concluded that no remedy is to be sought from the bureaucracy he insists on two measures essential to any remedy. One is that the bureaucracy should be supplemented by a power that is political in relation to private persons but at the same time unofficial and so free from the automatism of officialism. It is clearly a demand for a democratically elected body to control the administration. The other necessary condition is a free press. A free press utters not only the intelligence of a people but their heart and their needs. In this Prussian district of the Moselle there was not only a censorship but something like a pre-censorship, an intimidation that prevented things which might be censored from being written. Men were in fact prosecuted for their conversation and for promoting petitions.

By the time these articles were concluded the sentence of extinction was already passed upon the paper in which they appeared. Under the control of Marx its circulation had risen so that in a few months it had become one of the most powerful organs of the German press. But at

the same time the false dawn of freedom that followed the accession of Frederic William IV had faded from the Prussian sky, journal after journal had been suppressed, now the Leipzig Gazette and now Ruge's Year-books, and once more the censorship was being tightened. The king had been very much deceived in himself if he had supposed that he could really tolerate plain speech, and his anger was specially lively when the Rhenish Gazette discussed his plan of alterations in the law of divorce and refused to say from whom it had received this unpublished document. At the end of 1842 the death of the paper was fixed for April 1st in the next year, and to cope with Marx in this interval a new censor, St. Pol, was sent to Cologne.

St. Pol had no bureaucratic stiffness. He had shared the symposia of the doctor-club, or, as they now called themselves, the "Free ones." He was interested in the ideas of the day and lost no time in making the personal acquaintance of Marx, who seems to have had a certain attraction for him. He found in Marx "the theoretical centre and living source" of the ideas of the Rhenish Gazette, the "*spiritus rector* of the whole undertaking," a man who "would die for his opinions" which had their origin in "a deep speculative error." When on March 16th Marx retired from the paper, St. Pol thought it might be allowed to continue, as there was nobody left who was capable of maintaining its "odious dignity." But Berlin was inflexible, the Czar had complained of the paper to the king,[5] and at the end of the month the Rhenish Gazette went down with its colours flying, a defiant poem of liberty in the last number.

CHAPTER VI

A CRITICISM OF HEGEL

Driven from the public stage by the suppression of his paper, Marx "retired to the study." He did not consider himself yet fully equipped for dealing with the problems of socialism, and in philosophy he had not finished his reckoning with Hegel. The chief new star in the philosophical firmament was, for the young Hegelians at least, Feuerbach, whose *Essence of Christianity* appeared in 1841. "We all became Feuerbachians" wrote Engels long afterwards.

The influence of Feuerbach, with his insistence on life as the basis of thought, combined as it was for Marx with the study of socialism and with contact as editor with practical problems, led to fresh formulations which revealed the gulf that now separated the two writers of the *Trumpet of the Last Judgment.* Marx was not yet to engage in direct controversy with Bruno Bauer, but his co-operation with the whole group at Berlin had come to an end. They had attempted to make the Rhenish Gazette a channel for their provocative, abstract and irresponsible revolutionism, and Marx, with a sense of the mission of the paper, had refused to gratify them. His literary projects during the latter part of 1843 brought him into closer relations with Ruge, who likewise had quarrelled with the "Free Ones." In the meantime he occupied himself in writing a long criticism of Hegel's *Philosophy of Law.*

He comments on Hegel's work paragraph by paragraph,

commencing at that section of Hegel's work which deals with the division of the state into family and civil society. The family and civil society, according to Hegel, resulted dialectically from the self-evolved activity of the ethical will, the objective spirit embodied in the state, though to human individuals this grouping into families and into the social and economic relations that constitute civil society appears the result of their own free choice. Marx takes up on the contrary an empirical standpoint. He sees no reason for rejecting experience or for explaining it by a mysterious process operated from above the metaphysical clouds. Politics is for Marx a branch of sociology. Society is definitely prior to the state. The political system is an aspect of society. Statehood is a quality possessed by society. This is the meaning of the statement, in language adapted by Marx from Feuerbach, that society is the subject and the state the predicate, whereas Hegel reverses the relation. Herein, says Marx, "the entire mystery of the philosophy of law is expounded, and of the Hegelian philosophy as a whole."

In explaining existing institutions merely by the development of the idea, Hegel, according to the criticism of Marx, gives no explanation of them as they really are. Their own real nature is ignored. Nothing in them is regarded but the idea and the metaphysical dialectical movement. "They owe their being to a spirit other than their own." In this last sentence Marx hardly interprets the true thought of Hegel, who identified the absolute with the totality of its phenomenal manifestations. But Marx, in exposing the inadequacy and vagueness of the dialectic for the explanation of the actual world, is exposing a real vagary of Hegelianism. In treating the rela-

tion of things as if it were a consequence of the relation of concepts, Hegel is able, for example, to find in the transition from society and the family to the state an illustration of "necessity in ideality." But he does not explain the difference between this particular transition and other transitions, from transitions in natural science or in logic. Hegel speaks of the logical process as the soul of the institutions of which he treats. But according to Marx—and Feuerbach—the soul of the family is love. Hegel does not explain the family or anything else in its speciality. He merely distinguishes between that speciality and the presence, in the same thing, of some aspect of the universal idea. The former is freedom, the latter is necessity, freedom and necessity being only reconciled in the universal spirit itself. "The transition," complains Marx, "is not traced from the special nature of the family, the special nature of the state and so forth, but from the general relation of necessity and freedom." The whole of this preliminary part of the critique is devoted to an elaboration of this fundamental failure of Hegel to show how the idea produces what it is alleged to produce, in this case the powers and institutions of society and the state. The real truths in Hegel are not the outcome of his philosophical principles, but are as it were smuggled in as the result of his wide empirical knowledge and his reflections on it. That Hegel speaks of the state as an organism is, Marx agrees, an advance on Montesquieu, for example, but an advance due to observation of the state itself and not by any means a deduction from the universal idea as in Hegel's mode of statement it is made to seem. Hegel's derivation of the state from the idea of an organism would apply equally to anything else we

might choose to regard as an organism. In calling it the development of the idea to its differentiations, Hegel gets no step further from the general idea. And when he concludes "this organism is the political constitution," Marx asks why not say instead "this organism is the solar system?" No bridge has been thrown across the gulf separating the general idea of organism from the determinate idea of the state or the political constitution, "and none," says Marx, "ever will." In short, Hegel's whole treatise is a treatise of dialectic, a descant on concepts, a development of the idea of substance. The really political and juristic observations are parenthetic, *hors d'œuvres*, at most arbitrarily chosen examples. "Logic is not used to prove the nature of the state but the state is used for proving the logic. The universal concept is always taken as subject, the real concrete subject as predicate, assumed but not proved to be shown as necessarily derived in its actuality from its assumed subject." The supposed predicate, actuality, is treated as "a mere determination" of the supposed subject, the idea, "in special ways by its own development," that is the development of the idea. In evolving the state from the idea Hegel deludes himself into the belief that he has produced a live political rabbit out of the dead sleeve of abstractions, though he, of course, would not admit that the abstractions were dead, nor indeed that the ideas are the abstractions as which Marx regards them. "Instead of the concept of the constitution," writes Marx, "we get the constitution of the concept." For this arbitrary attachment of real things to logical abstractions Marx uses the word "mystification." "The fact, which is the starting-point, is not conceived as such but as a mystic result" of metaphysics, or even

of mere hypostatized entities of logic. Hegel's thought about the state, in so far as it is systematic thought, is a ready-made garment, not cut to the measure of the state itself; in so far as it fits the state it is unavowed empiricism.

One really practical and not merely formal deduction Hegel does draw from his general principles. The spirit, as spirit, only is in reality what it is consciously. The state as spirit or mind of a people is really what it is in the self-consciousness of that people. Consequently each people has the constitution that suits it. This reasoning, which would justify the extreme right wing of the Hegelian school in its acceptance of existing institutions, has led to an obviously false conclusion. As Marx points out, the constitution does not always change with the needs of a people and with their enlightened opinion.

After this statement of fundamental objections, Marx follows Hegel into the separate treatment of the different powers of the constitution. "The political state," says Hegel, "thus"—"how 'thus'?" interjects Marx, not denying the fact but the reality of its deduction—"the political state thus divides into the following differentiations of its substance:

"(*a*) The authority to determine and establish the general rule, the legislative authority.

"(*b*) The subsumption of the special spheres and particular cases under the general rule, governmental power.

"(*c*) The subjective factor as the ultimate decision of will, the authority of the prince in which the distinct powers are composed into an individual unity which is therefore the summit and basis of the whole—constitutional monarchy."

The prince's authority is treated first. Carefully and elaborately Marx exposes the process by which Hegel evolves an ostensibly constitutional but actually absolute monarchy from the idea of the state. Had Hegel treated the universal as what it is, an abstraction from a plurality, he might have placed the absolute will in the whole body of citizens. But he treats abstract will as subject, and as purely abstract will it is groundless, irresponsible will. The princely power, then, which is the ultimate, deciding authority, represents irresponsible will, caprice; and since this ultimate subjectivity is individuality it cannot become actual and be represented in the concrete world except by an individual. The state whose will is represented by an irresponsible individual is an absolute monarchy. Marx paraphrases Hegel's reasoning as follows: "Because subjectivity is only as subject an actuality, and every subject is only one, the personality of the state is only as one person actual," and comments: "Hegel might as well conclude 'because the individual man is a single unit, the human race is only a single man.' "

The influence of Feuerbach is shown not merely in Marx's use of the distinction between institutions and abstractions as subject and predicate but in his doctrine of the species. Continuing his criticism of Hegel's doctrine of princely power, Marx writes: "Personality is certainly only an abstraction when taken apart from the person, but it is only in the existence of the species, as persons, that the person is the realized idea of personality." Marx is here maintaining the sovereignty of the people against the Hegelian individual ruler of the so-called constitutional monarchy. Hegel will accept the sovereignty of the people as it were in a Pickwickian sense, that is of the

people considered as another name for the state embodied in its monarch. But "if," he writes, "by sovereignty of the people be understood the republican, or more definitely the democratic form, then, as against the developed Idea, there is no question of it," a sentence that gives Marx occasion to formulate philosophically the case for democracy. What he says amounts to this: We have to consider the formal principle as well as the material principle of the state. In Hegel's monarchy form and matter are divorced. The monarch alone represents the form of the state. The whole power of the state, the political principle, is embodied, materialized, actualized in the king alone, whilst the people, who are the material of the state, are left as private persons, as unpoliticized humanity. But in a democracy the people and the state, that is the matter and the form of politics, coincide. The people are the material of the state: and the form of the state, the state as idea, is the political form of the people. The sovereignty, the political predicate, belongs to every citizen as citizen; but his citizenship is only one of the predicates to be affirmed of him, only an abstraction from his humanity. But Hegel, says Marx, "is writing the biography of the Idea." The family and civil society are for him, therefore, not predicates of the human being. He cannot say a man is a father, a citizen, a member of a profession or gild or club. All he can arrive at is to treat these different qualities of a man as so many representatives of the Idea. In Hegel's hands, therefore, political theory is not a system of generalizations about human society, but an allegory in which abstractions, representatives of the Idea, are arbitrarily represented in turn by anybody or anything Hegel likes to put for them.

Hereditary monarchy is established in the same way as absolute monarchy. The principle of individuality—and we saw that the sovereign must be an individual—is the body. The king, then, must be the result of physical procreation. "So the highest function of the monarch," comments Marx, "is his sexual function, because thereby he creates a king." But in truth it is all an allegory, the life and adventures of the Idea as Proteus, a philosophy standing on its head.

After the princely or monarchical principle in the state comes what Hegel and Marx call the governmental authority. They are not quite agreed as to its scope, since Hegel, with his eye on the Prussian constitution, combines closely the administrative and police authorities with the judiciary, whilst Marx insists on the opposition between judiciary and executive. But his chief objection to Hegel's treatment of this part of the subject is the failure to develope it in a philosophical manner. Little more is provided than a description of the actual organization of the Prussian civil service. At least enough philosophy, however, is implied to provide material of controversy. What Hegel defends and Marx attacks is bureaucracy, a bureaucracy responsible as a whole to the monarch and, as a hierarchy, to itself. Hegel sees in the bureaucracy a body in which private interest is identified with public duty, the particular with the general. Marx had been on quite Hegelian lines in the article in which he had preferred a bureaucracy to a system of estates. But after the experience of the wine-growers of the Moselle he has come to see in the bureaucracy a body in which public affairs have become the monopoly, the private business and advantage of a single order of men. As in the case of the monarch,

the form is in a false relation to the matter, outside of it and inorganically related to it, using and exploiting it, not responsive to its needs and its life. Civil society is conceived by Hegel as organized in gilds and corporations of various kinds as in pre-revolutionary Europe. For Marx, as for Rousseau, these are obstacles to the assertion of the general will. So long as they were powerful the corporations were opposed by the bureaucracy to whom they were rivals for administrative authority. Now they are weak and fading away the bureaucracy upholds them. The bureaucracy, too, is a corporation—a very close one—and must support the corporative idea.

The summing up of the matter is that here again Hegel is making an arbitrary application of logic. "He gives to his logic a political body; he does not give us the logic of the political body." It is once more a "mystification." The bureaucratic hierarchy, like the theological hierarchy of the Middle Ages, is based on magic, on an assumption of authorization by the unseen, the Idea. Bureaucracy is political jesuitry. Hegel has treated the subject with scant thoroughness. In reality, says Marx, it is the most difficult part of political theory, and it is more important for the whole people to possess real executive power than even to make the laws.

But it is to Hegel's treatment of the legislative power that Marx devotes the greater part, much more than half, of his critical commentary. The first difficulty arises from the relation of the legislature to the constitution. It exists under the constitution but it is itself the maker of the constitution, and modifies it when made. Each is presupposed by the other. Hegel's solution is that the constitution is a synthesis of being and becoming, and

becoming is, in his view, gradual and imperceptible. Marx objects both on philosophical and on historical grounds. If the becoming or modification of the constitution is imperceptible, that is to say a matter of blind necessity, what becomes of the Hegelian state as embodying the conscious freedom of the moral will? Historically Marx finds the most important changes to have taken place not by gradual adaptation or imperceptible modification but by revolution, at least in cases where a new constitution has been the result.

Throughout the whole of this section the leading distinction is between the political and the unpolitical state; in other words between the state and society. This distinction had been brought into some degree of clearness during the eighteenth century especially by the physiocrats. Their problem had been to procure changes in the social and economic organization without touching the existing system of government. Side by side with this distinction Marx applies, throughout, the conception of law as the expression of the general will, showing traces of the same difficulty which the application of this doctrine had for all disciples of Rousseau, namely, that the general will is in theory the law of reason and in practice the will of the whole or most of the people, two criteria which may at any time fail to give the same result. But clearly if any part of the people is excluded from sharing legislative authority the will is not general so far as the constitution is concerned.

The general objection of Marx to Hegel's treatment of the legislative power is that whilst Hegel on the one hand represents the state as the expression of the freedom of the moral will, a harmony of the subjective freedom of

the individual with the objective rationality of institutions, he has before his mind as an ideal the existing constitution of the Prussian state, in which this freedom does not exist, in which the people's share in legislation is illusory. It is for treating this illusion as a reality that Marx most blames Hegel. Just as by a "mystification," the king and the officials are enskied in the divine idea of the state, so by a converse or complementary mystification the share of the people in the state only exists as logic or formalism. The hocus-pocus is effected in this case through the system of estates. It is these that are supposed to represent the people in their legislative capacity. But since all real power has already been given to the king and his officials, the state, which is the organization of the community for government, is already complete without the estates. The people affords, therefore, that contradiction in nomenclature the unpolitical state.

Hegel, moreover, confuses society with the state. His medievalism requires society in its various corporative bodies to be represented as such in the estates. At the same time his conception of the state as the supreme moral reality requires the political character of the estates to predominate, to the complete exclusion or transmutation of the partial or sectional wills which they represent in their social character. Marx finds here a contradiction not only in Hegel but in the existing state which Hegel had before his eyes. It can be removed only by the acquisition of legislative, that is supreme, power by the whole people. Hegel is not to be blamed for describing the existing state as it is, but for treating it as if it were the rational state with which it is in contradiction.

These inconsistencies appear most in the treatment of

the landed estate. Hegel favours this estate partly for "mystical" reasons, partly on practical grounds, such as had been already alleged by Burke. It represents, by the institution of primogeniture, nature, as did the hereditary monarch, nature and the family. By reason of its fixed tenure, moreover, it is superior to the fluctuations of fortune and the temptations of corruption. It earns these distinctions by great renunciations. The firstborn is bound to the soil and the natural affections of the testator towards his other children are sacrified.

Of all this Marx makes short work. Primogeniture certainly does not represent the principle of the family if it sacrifices affection, since the principle of the family is love. In the inalienability of landed property Marx sees its independence of and isolation from the rest of society. It is the very apotheosis of private as opposed to social property; it is removed from the influences and organic life of society as a whole; it represents nothing but itself.

Hegel makes the legislative power a balance of extremes and at the same time a mediation between them. The extremes are the monarch and civil society. The means are the bureaucracy and the estates. But the representation of society in the estates is vague and illusory, whilst the bureaucracy, whose expert knowledge of social needs ought to redeem the monarch from his isolation as extreme, is nominated by him. The picture of the constitution as a balance and mediation is merely one more mystification and logical unreality.

Hegel's method of treating concepts as the fundamental realities makes the relations of human beings a consequence of the relations of concepts. Marx insists on the human being as the fundamental reality. From the needs

and actions of the human being result the various constitutional and other predicates that can be affirmed of him. This reversal of Hegel is the Copernican step of Feuerbach, no less important to Marx and others at that time than the more famous Copernican step of Kant had been to an earlier generation. Marx was doing for Hegelian politics what Feuerbach had done for Christian religion; he was retransferring reality from ideal projections to actual human beings, not merely, like Bruno Bauer, to their self-consciousness but to their whole selves.

Not as a member of this or that class or corporation is a man to share the power of the state, but as a human being. This is the great truth of the French Revolution which Marx defends against the charges of atomism and abstraction. The legislative assembly, since it is elected by society, is in a sense the political abstract of that society. But if the abstraction is complete, if the distinctions of society are in the election and its results completely lost, then the abstraction is self-destroyed as such in its own realization, since it returns to its own concrete basis, the ultimate reality, the individual human being.

Marx does not, in this criticism of Hegel, make his own system complete. He is half the time applying an immanent criticism to Hegel, accepting Hegel's own principle of the agreement between logic and facts and showing that he has not developed it consistently, has not chosen the right intermediate terms or come to the right conclusions. But half the time Marx is applying the opposite principle which he derived from Feuerbach. With this naturalistic basis his acceptance of so much dialectic from Hegel is not easy to reconcile. Thus he grounds his defence of democracy partly on the claims

of the individual human being, partly on the success of the democratic principle in reconciling the concepts of form and matter. He is at least as anxious to show that on Hegel's own principles democracy alone corresponds to the true idea of the state as to maintain the right of the human individual to be regarded as the fundamental reality. The question whether Marx ever completed the transition which he seems here to be making is not one which it will fall within the scope of the present work to determine. Feuerbach had shaken and transformed the Hegelian in Marx but not expelled him.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM

One of the problems underlying the criticism of Hegel dealt with in the previous chapter is the determination of the nature of society. What is society? We have seen that the state was to become a democracy. What was to become of society? The solution reached in the work on Hegel treated the human being as an individual whose needs as an individual dictated the political solution given. The relation of the individual to the state is found, but apparently only by a negation of society in political representation. Marx did not rest here. The problem of the negation of existing society was in fact to occupy him for the rest of his life, combined with the determination of the historical character of society itself. The progress of his thought in the months following his relinquishment of his editorial chair can be traced in letters and in a few essays published early in 1844 in the Franco-German Year-books.

The title of this publication indicates the next phase of the German democratic movement in so far as it was represented by Marx, Hess, Ruge and a few of their associates. They despaired for the time being of Germany and looked to France as the country which had gone farthest towards realizing political freedom. To combine German philosophy with French revolutionary tradition was to be the function of a new paper to be issued in Paris, where they hoped for the collaboration of leading French democrats; Lamartine, Louis Blanc, Lamennais

and Proudhon were among those upon whom they had designs. For this purpose Ruge, Marx, Hess and the poet Herwegh went to live in Paris, the migration of Marx taking place in October 1843. In reliance on his engagement with Ruge as part editor of the new venture he had married Jenny von Westphalen in June. Their subsequent life together, as is well known, was one of the most completely happy companionships of historic persons, in spite of terrible privations and heart-breaking bereavements.

The exile of Marx was destined, except for a brief and revolutionary interval, to be permanent. He was to find his answers to the social and economic problems of the time in countries where social and economic development was far more advanced than in Germany. As time went on the rising socialism of Germany was to take its guidance from a prophet whose familiarity with living proletarians was experienced almost exclusively in France and England.

It proved to be impossible to get any help from the French democratic leaders, and the Franco-German Year-books, of which the only number came out in February, 1844, contained only the contributions of Ruge, Heine, Marx, Engels, Herwegh, Hess, Jacoby, Bernays, Feuerbach and, the only non-German among them, Bakunin. Ruge supplied a short introduction of the nature of a prospectus. This was followed by a correspondence between Ruge, Feuerbach, Bakunin and Marx. Some of the letters had been written almost a year earlier; they were now made to serve as a supplementary introduction to the Year-books. With a brief letter dated March, 1843, expressing his shame at the political humiliation of the

Germans, Marx opens the series. The year 1843 was one of disastrous reaction in Germany and in Switzerland. The hand of power had struck not only Marx and the Rhenish Gazette but the Leipzic Gazette; Ruge, suppressing his Year-books; Weitling, the proletarian communist; Froebel, the mineralogist who had devoted himself to the publication of socialist literature in Zurich, and the poet Herwegh to whom Froebel had entrusted the direction of an important paper. But Marx refuses to despair. Even shame is a revolution of a kind, the lion drawing backward for the leap. The governments are a ship of fools and ahead lies the revolutionary reef. Ruge's reply shows no hope. "The Germans will always be incapable of liberty." "See how this people fights for us!" This exclamation, attributed to the King of Prussia, expressed the truth about the so-called war of liberation. Even the liberty formerly allowed to philosophers, though it was merely freedom to say that man was free in theory, has now been taken away. Only physically this useful German folk does not perish; it fights the battles of its rulers. Spiritually it has no future.

Marx replies in May to what he calls this elegy, this dirge. Despair is for him an impossibility. A people hopes ever, and even if its hopes arise only from stupidity, its pious wishes will one day be realized by political wisdom. Over the dead let the dead lament. The enviable task is to be the first to enter into the new life. The present belongs indeed to the philistine, but the way of advance lies in the study and criticism of the present. The philistine must therefore be examined. His world is found to be politically the animal kingdom. Marx had used this term earlier of the institution of primogeniture, including

hereditary monarchy, the animal kingdom whose principle was to live and propagate. Since the nature of man is reason and liberty, such a world is dehumanized. Montesquieu was wrong, says Marx, in taking honour as the animating principle of a monarchical state. Its principle is the dehumanization of man. There follows a brilliant sketch of the character of the new King of Prussia. His father had been a typical philistine and normal conservative, making no intellectual pretensions and knowing quite well that for a state like his all that was needed was a quiet prosaic existence. But Frederic William IV could not be satisfied with this. He wanted to fill everything with his own personality. In place of a spirit of routine he put one of caprice and sentiment. His personal wishes were to be law. This did not make the system any less philistine. Though the king had begun with an attempt at allowing some freedom to the press, this apparent liberalism soon collapsed, as it was bound to do. Frederic William's absolutism of theory and temper could not but come into collision with those who took the proffered freedom seriously. The real disposition of the king was seen in his court, which his romantic fondness for the past had filled with the uniforms of chivalry and clericalism.

In this correspondence the letters of Marx alone have any interest for us, perhaps any importance at all. Ruge says he is recalled to hopefulness by Marx; Bakunin writes eloquently that philosophy must be accommodated to the needs of the people; and Feuerbach, very briefly, that it must be cleared of old rubbish. But the letters of Marx throw light on his development. His letter of May concludes with a definite analysis of the historical process of social and political change. The dehumanized society of

the monarchy is moving towards revolution not only by reason of the incapacity of the masters and the lethargy of their servants and subjects, though these alone would wreck it in time. But the new society is receiving recruits from those who suffer and from those who think, and these two classes are coming to an understanding. A breach within the existing society is being made "by the system of industry and commerce, of property and the exploitation of human beings even more rapidly than by the increase of the population." The function of philosophy is to bring the old world clearly into the light of day and to give a positive shaping to the new.

In the last of the letters, dated September, 1843, Marx returns to the subject of the philosophical task. "The advantage of our new line is that we do not anticipate the movement of the world but wish to find the new by criticism of the old." Dogmatic communism likewise must be criticized. The communism of Cabet, Dézamy, Weitling and others is only one particular manifestation of the humanistic principle and is still infected with its opposite, the system of private advantage. Its one-sidedness is shown by the concurrent existence of other socialistic doctrines, Fourier's for instance, and Proudhon's.

And just as the communists only represent one side of the socialistic principle, so the whole of socialism only represents one side of humanity. "We have also to concern ourselves with the other side, the theoretic life of man, religion, science, etc., as the object of our criticism."

"Reason has always existed, but not always in a rational form. The critic can therefore fasten upon any form of the theoretical and practical consciousness and out of the special forms of existing reality develop the true reality

of that which ought to be, that which is the end." The existing political state, though "not consciously filled with the demands of socialism," contains, in its modern forms, "the demands of reason." Its ideal function is in contradiction with its actual assumptions.

"From this conflict of the political state with itself arises the development of social truth. As religion is the index, the summary of contents of man's theoretic struggles, so is the political state that of his practical struggles." For instance, the question between the representative system and the system of estates is the political expression of the issue between private property and humanity. The socialists are therefore wrong in thinking such political discussions to be beneath their notice. The advocates of the representative system, if they prevail, must go beyond that system. The right course, therefore, is to attach oneself to existing political causes, clear them up and make them show their lack of finality. "Our election-cry must be: Reform of the consciousness not through dogmas but through analysis of the mystical consciousness which is unclear to itself, whether it appear in its religious or its political form." The aim must be not to set the future against the past, but to complete the thoughts of the past.

This letter contains the embryonic form of the socialism of Marx. It contains the answer to the question sometimes asked with relation to the form in which he first conceived socialistic doctrine, the question whether he ever belonged to the utopian school which came to be known for a short time as "true socialists." He had, even before he became a socialist, as we have seen, rejected the doctrines of this school in his criticism of Hess in the Rhenish Gazette.

He now again refuses "to set the future against the past," to conceive an ideal state and try to attain it regardless of the conditions of the present. The present carries, for Marx, the logical implications of the future to be unfolded by criticism. Marx does not slough the Hegelian conception of history and then develope towards dialectical materialism. Dialectical his thought became when he adopted Hegelianism in 1837, and such it remained throughout. Materialism, in the only sense in which Marx was ever seriously a materialist, came with Feuerbach's influence in 1841. The letters just reviewed bear various dates of 1843, but it is safer to take their date of publication—February, 1844—as the date of the opinions in them since the letters of Marx were possibly altered by him when they were prepared for the press. The Marxian doctrine of 1844 does not combine the two elements, dialectic and materialism, in a single system. Three or even two years later the system is there. Intensive study of economics and above all of economic history filled the interval, but did not yield obvious systematic results in the voluminous criticisms of German contemporaries which constitute most of Marx's output at the time.

Other contributions to the Franco-German Year-books further illustrate the direction of his approach to socialism. An article on the Jewish question is an answer to Bruno Bauer. The Jewish claim to full citizenship was opposed by Bauer on the ground that the existing state in Germany was Christian. Bauer did not approve of the Christian character of the state, but he maintained that neither Jew nor Christian was politically emancipated and that so long as the state remained upon a religious basis political freedom was impossible. The grant of political rights to

a Jew could only be nominal and illusory. Marx requires first a more thorough examination of the meaning of emancipation. Bauer, he complains, has not discussed the relation between political emancipation and human emancipation. Political rights not only can be but are possessed, for example, both in France and in the United States, by the votaries of different religions including the Jewish. Though political rights do not constitute complete human freedom they are not on that account to be refused. Bauer is too exclusively attentive to religion. He should have seen that other elements of civil society have a similar effect of counteracting purely political emancipation. Private property with its inequalities operates in the same way, so do differences of birth, rank, culture and occupation. The state which gives equal rights as citizens to all the inhabitants of its territories ignores all these differences. It has thus an ideal character in relation to the material reality of civil society, a "heavenly" being as opposed to the "earthly" existence of society, leaving man as *bourgeois* or member of civil society in contradiction with himself as *citoyen* or member of the political state. Political emancipation is a great step in progress, though it is not the final form of human emancipation. What it does is to make religion a private matter, to free the state from theological presuppositions which impaired its political character. The Christian state yields some of its political character to the church by allowing the church an influence on the laws. But the same is true of other elements of civil society besides religion. The feudal lord and the gild absorbed each a part of the political essence of the state and it was the work of the French Revolution to integrate the state in these respects. But civil society

was then only resolved into its primal nature of egoistic individualism. Marx quotes several constitutions, those of France in 1791, 1793 and 1795 as well as those of Pennsylvania and New Hampshire to show the purely individualistic character of the rights resulting from the revolution.

When he read Feuerbach's *Preliminary Theses towards the Reformation of Philosophy*, he complained that Feuerbach had not dealt with politics but only with nature. Feuerbach's criticism of religion was that in it man had transferred his own needs and emotions to an imaginary world of spiritual beings and symbolic projections of his own nature, thus impoverishing his actual existence. In distinguishing, as Marx does here, a religion, Christianity or Judaism, in its religious, its unreal, heavenly theological form from the anthropological, real basis of it, he is simply repeating Feuerbach. But he goes further when he says that political emancipation becomes full human emancipation when the state ceases to be an ideal, heavenly system ignoring the anarchic, egoistic, real condition of civil society, when the state incorporates the real human basis of the religious, economic and other elements of civil society. Until then the rights of man will be in conflict with the rights of the citizen. Only then will the individual man cease to be the sport of anarchy and egoism within him and without, and become identified with the interests of the community and mankind.

This result is more effectively put in a second chapter of the Jewish essay, a chapter in which he answers Bauer's question on the capacity of the Jews and Christians of the present day to become free. As before, Marx widens Bauer's purely theological outlook by making that political

application of Feuerbach's principle which he had missed in Feuerbach himself. What is the human essence, as distinguished from the theological phantasm, of the Jewish religion? This human essence or earthly basis of Judaism is, he answers, practical needs, self-interest, money-making. Marx had no love for the religion of his forefathers. Its divine law he regarded as an arbitrary regulation of material concerns without reference to the true nature of man. And so the earthly reality corresponding to this sordid heaven was self-interest and the money market. On this terrain the Jews had indeed emancipated themselves; here their activities were unrestricted. What was more, the Christians had in this respect become Jews. The real contradiction in modern humanity, between the citizen and the bourgeois, the state and civil society, "heaven" and reality, was the contradiction between the political state according to the constitution and the egoistic money-power of civil society. Marx quotes Münzer the anabaptist: "all things have become property, the fish in the water, the birds of the air and all that groweth upon the Earth—the creatures must become free." The emancipation of Christian and Jew alike is incomplete because merely political. So long as political emancipation stands alone it resides only in the "heaven" of the constitution. "The social emancipation of the Jews means the emancipation of society from Judaism, from the power of money."

In another essay which appeared in the same paper, the *Criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*, which had been intended at first for an introduction to his unpublished book on that subject, Marx states very clearly at the outset what was meant by the application of Feuer-

bach's principles to politics, and how far he had already advanced beyond Feuerbach. The basis of Feuerbach's doctrine is man. Marx now applies criticism to this fundamental concept. "Man is no abstract being, squatting somewhere beyond the world. Man is the human world, the state, society." Religion therefore is not to be explained as if it were the projection of a Robinson Crusoe. It is a social product, "the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, the mind of a mindless condition of things. It is the opium of the people." But the criticism of religion must be followed by a criticism of the society of which it was the expression. It is the work of history to establish the earthly truth after the heavenly phantasm has vanished, the duty of "a philosophy working in the service of history" to criticize politics now that the criticism of religion has been achieved.

But the performance of this task in the case of Germany is made difficult by the fact that modern conditions have as yet reached that country only in the form of philosophy. The critic is therefore dealing with "a copy, not an original." So soon as he attempts to criticize the characteristic social and political phenomena of the age he finds himself "*outside the German status quo.*" Supposing even the German conditions of 1843 abolished, the result would scarcely be on a level with the France of 1789. For example, a nationalistic protectionist movement is beginning in Germany, the dawn of a consciousness that politics and wealth are somehow connected, but at the same time it is the sunrise of a day that in France and England has almost reached nightfall. Germany sets itself to establish the control of private property over the state, whilst France and England are becoming aware of the

necessity for society to control wealth, the real contemporary problem, since German politics are an anachronism. The real tragic end of the old world was in the French Revolution, even as the tragic end of the ancient pagan gods arrived with the Prometheus of Aeschylus. But the old gods, tragically dead, lived comically on to be derided by Lucian, and the old German world lives on after 1789 below the level of serious criticism.

But though German history had broken off fifty years ago in politics, it had in philosophy continued up to the present. "German philosophy is the ideal prolongation of German history." The Germans have certainly to negate the conditions of their practical life; they possess, however, this negation already in their philosophy. The practical people who wish to continue the German political movement from where it is, to turn their back on philosophy and join the future to the living reality forget that the living reality of Germany only exists in philosophy. They cannot abolish that philosophy without first realizing it.

But this realizing of German philosophy is no simple matter, since though Germany has not developed politically with other countries it has accompanied their development in contemplation, and has shared in practice its disadvantages without its gains. It has had the reaction without the revolution; has not enjoyed the birth of liberty but has assisted at her funeral. For a revolution like that of 1789 it was requisite that the bourgeoisie, in the name of humanity, should realize for itself the rights of man. The German bourgeoisie, having missed the occasion for this, cannot now do it. The reason is that the bourgeoisie can no longer genuinely feel itself to represent humanity.

To do so would be to ignore what the rest of the world sees, that the cause of humanity is no longer represented by the bourgeoisie. The proletariat is already there. The proletariat alone can now claim to represent humanity and bring to its redemption that sense of the justice of its claims, that good conscience in its action, which is necessary for a successful revolution. The emancipation of the proletariat will be the complete human emancipation of society, since all the oppressions of society are concentrated in the proletariat. The Germans have in the philosophy of Hegel a philosophy of the state certainly in advance of German social and political conditions, but still a philosophy which is itself the offspring of past conditions. It must certainly be realized, but that will mean its own negation and supersession by a more complete philosophy. The revolution which is to effect this will be the proletarian revolution, not a mere philosophical revolution. "The weapon of criticism cannot take the place of the criticism of the weapon." But that revolution will not begin in Germany. "The German day will be heralded by the crowing of the Gallic cock."

These articles were written in Paris about the end of 1843. In March, 1843, Marx had retired from the Rhenish Gazette without having arrived, so far as there is any evidence to show it, at a socialistic doctrine, and we know that a very little while before he had had an open mind on the subject. During the nine months or so that saw his marriage and his exile he had attained to the beliefs expressed in these articles of the Franco-Prussian Yearbooks. He retained from Hegel the dialectical, historical attitude, but in the place of the Absolute he had now human society as the reality. The social *primum mobile*

had as it were become its own moving spirit. From Feuerbach he retained man as the centre of the universe, but had superseded Feuerbach's absolute man by social man. Feuerbach considered the individual as man in his consciousness of species and in emotional relation with others; Marx as determined in all his life by a definite condition of society. From Hess he retained the philosophy of action, of action as the completion of philosophy, but he repudiated the utopian programme of realizing an ideal created solely by imagination.

Such was, very briefly summarized, the intellectual change in Marx during the year 1843. A fresh emotional orientation corresponded to it. His Promethean idealism, the *amor intellectualis* of liberty, born and nurtured in the study, was now deepened by a passionate indignation and sympathy for the struggle of the dispossessed. He had already fought the battle of the forest-dwellers and the distressed vine-growers. In Paris he made personal contact with revolutionary labouring men. "Among these people," he writes in 1844, "the brotherhood of man is no phrase, but truth and human nobility shine from their labour-hardened forms"; and a year later, in the Holy Family, "one must experience what are the studies, the mental hunger, the restless impulse for development in the French and English workers, in order to be able to form a notion of the human nobility of the movement."

CHAPTER VIII

PHILOSOPHY AND ECONOMICS

THESE first months at Paris were months of intense study. Ruge complained that sometimes Marx would not go to bed for four nights in succession. The excerpts from his reading during this period are chiefly from the memoirs of the French Jacobin Levasseur and from political economists. Marx cherished for some time an intention to write an historical work on the French Revolution. The excerpts from Levasseur relate chiefly to the impotence of the Legislative Assembly and to the struggle between the Mountain and the Gironde in the Convention. Underlined sentences show that Marx was particularly interested in the fact that the really important struggle under the Legislative, the struggle between the court and the people, took place outside the assembly itself.

The excerpts from the economists, and the comments following them, are of much more importance. Here we trace the birth of the Marxian theory of labour-value. There is much from Adam Smith and much from Ricardo and Say. Other contributors are James Mill, MacCulloch, Destutt de Tracy, Frederic Skarbek and the profound seventeenth-century writer de Boisguillebert.

Of Ricardo Marx says that he developes the discovery that labour embraces the whole amount of the price, because capital, too, is labour. Say shows that Ricardo has forgotten the profits of capital and land, which are not given for nothing. Proudhon rightly concludes from this that where private property exists a thing costs more

than it is worth, precisely by this tribute to the owner of private property. According to Say accumulation is the result of production and savings, that is of a previous privation. "Privation to be sure," says Marx, "since the production is by the workers and the savings are the capitalist's."

Marx gradually developes an attack on the whole science of economics as understood by the economists, parallel to his objections to Hegel. For instance, Ricardo claims that in writing of value in exchange he means the "natural price," regardless of the accidents of competition, which he calls momentary or accidental. This means, according to Marx, that the abstraction is treated as real and the concrete actuality as accidental. The whole Ricardian system realizes a paradise of abstractions leaving their contradictions in the world of men. Thus: "The common circle of political economy. Intellectual freedom the aim. Therefore mindless servitude for the majority. Physical needs the only aim. Therefore the only aim of the majority. Or, conversely, marriage the aim. Therefore prostitution of the majority. Property the aim. Therefore lack of property for the majority."

Ricardo has, however, the merit of having destroyed some of the optimistic illusions of Adam Smith. He shows that wages are not necessarily raised by competition between capitalists. "The number of labourers is now in all industrial countries above the demand, and can daily be recruited from the workless proletariat, to which it, in turn, daily yields recruits." Nor, as Smith supposed, is the interest of the landowner always identical with that of society. "Thus do the economists destroy each other's idols."

A main line of Marx's criticism appears in the following passage: "By denying all significance to gross revenue, namely to the quantity of production and consumption, apart from surplus, political economy denies all significance to life, and here its abstractness reaches the peak of infamy. So it transpires (i) that there is no question of any national or human interest but only of net revenue, profit, rent, that this is the ultimate purpose of a nation, (ii) that a human life has of itself no value, (iii) that the value of the working class is limited to the necessary cost of production." This is essentially the note struck later by Ruskin in his motto "There is no wealth but life."

Say considers a population of seven millions better than one of five millions because a large mass of workers provides a better army than a small population of clerks engaged in money-business and because there is more happiness in seven than in five millions. This last sentence is certainly not open to the above objection to Ricardo, but it is, according to Marx, unrealistic. There is, he replies, in truth, more *misery* among seven than among five millions. He blames Say further for treating men as cannon-fodder. Moreover, international competition is in reality war and should not be defended on the false assumption that private property is patriotic.

James Mill follows Ricardo in attributing to generalizations the reality that belongs only to individual cases, in claiming for the rule what is due only to the variation. Marx calls money an exteriorization of human life and effort, a self-alienation of the human being by which the real human being becomes enslaved. Money is the most abstract form of value, a form of the product of labour in which it can be most easily abstracted from the

labourer. The mercantilists of old worshipped money in that they thought the wealth of a country depended on more of the precious metals being imported than was exported. The modern economists, in their exclusive regard for net profit, whose abstract expression is money, cherish the same superstition in the form of credit and banking. Even the Saint Simonians were deceived into regarding the banking system as reconciling the various interests of mankind. They thought it represented confidence, though in reality it is the apotheosis of mistrust. It values all men in money. Credit is political economy's criterion of morality. As credit is only given to those that already have it, the gulf between rich and poor becomes ever wider. Political economy is for Marx what religion is for Feuerbach, a system in which human values are projected into an existence outside man, who ceases to have significance outside his bank-book. The paradox is brought out, in a comment on MacCulloch, that the more the economists acknowledge labour as the sole source of wealth, the more does labour, together with the labourer who embodies it, become a mere commodity. By a calculation of averages, the explicit form of contempt for the individual, the private wealth of the few is taken as equivalent to the common wealth of society. This falsification is the crowning infamy of political economy. Marx nowhere denies that the political economists, in spite of occasional errors and fallacies, give a true science of the world as it is.

The chief immediate result of his studies in 1844 consists in a mass of manuscript on philosophy and political economy which has only recently been published. A preface which he composed for it reveals his intention

of treating in a series of essays the subjects of law, morals and politics in relation to political economy, leaving to a separate work their final synthesis for the science of society. He claims in this preface that his results are obtained by a completely empirical analysis based on a conscientious and critical study of political economy. Besides the French and English writers he claims to have read Weitling, Hess and Engels, the only German economists in whom he finds any substance and freshness. To Feuerbach he pays the following tribute: "Political economy owes its true foundation to the discoveries of Feuerbach. . . . From Feuerbach dates the first positive humanistic and naturalistic critical science." His works are "the only writings since Hegel's Phenomenology and Logic in which a true revolution of theory is contained." Among Feuerbach's books Marx singles out the *Philosophy of the Future* and *Theses towards the Reformation of Philosophy*.

The manuscript of 1844 is a critical commentary on the economists whom he had been reading. In them Marx found the laws operating in modern industry and commerce. His own aim is to criticize their presuppositions, which are the groundwork of existing conditions, and thus to unfold the human or philosophic significance of those laws. What he emphasizes first is the conflict between capitalist and worker on which the whole system depends. In this conflict, for reasons given by Adam Smith, victory necessarily lies with the capitalist. The separation of rent, interest and wages tells only against the wage-earner. For while rent and interest can form an alliance to command labour, labour can command neither rent nor interest, since wages tend continually to fall to the level

of the bare needs of subsistence. The labourer has become a commodity whose price is determined by the cost of his production. When the employer loses, the worker loses too. When the employer gains, the worker does not always gain, since increased capital replaces him by machinery, whilst increasing division of labour specializes him, and so diminishes his range of possible employment. When both capitalist and labourer suffer, the former suffers only in the diminution of his capital, the latter in the essence of his life.

Capital is therefore the worker's enemy, and, since capital is only accumulated labour, the worker is enslaved by his own production, which condemns him to competition and its consequences, beggary or starvation. The competition becomes more intense and more deadly in proportion as the smaller capitalists are driven into the ranks of labour, whilst the diminishing number of the great ones enables them to combine more easily to exploit the growing majority of poor men. As the national wealth increases, the number of the unhappy increases. The aim of political economy is the increase of wealth, therefore of unhappiness. The man who, without possessing capital or rent, lives by his labour is the proletarian. Him political economy does not treat as a man, even when he is not working, but leaves his non-industrial and more human aspects to criminal justice, to the physician, the clergyman, to statistics, politics and the overseer of the poor. The first section of the manuscript closes with a vivid representation of the misery of the industrial system.

The second section deals with the profits of capital. These profits are always in proportion to the amount of the capital, though for very different quantities of capital

the work of supervision and direction may be the same, and in great factories this work is often entrusted to a manager or chief clerk, whose salary has no relation to the amount of capital for whose yield he is responsible. The definition of capital is taken from Adam Smith. A stock is any accumulation of the produce of the soil and of manufacture. It becomes capital when used to obtain profit or revenue. The gains of the capitalist are in an inverse ratio to public prosperity, since the increase of national wealth leads to a competition of investors and a lowering of the rate of interest. Monopoly and the concentration of capital only enhance the opposition between the public welfare and the interests of the capitalist.

The section dealing with the rent of land emphasizes further the opposition between the interests of classes. The landowner and the tenant are in mutual hostility and both of them gain by the lowering of wages. Particularly welcome to Marx is Ricardo's correction of Adam Smith's theory of rent. Ricardo shows that rent is the pocketing by the landlord of all gain from the superior fertility of one field over another, and represents no contribution whatever towards the value of the produce. In the end, chiefly by the increased investment of industrial profits in land, the landowner and the capitalist combine. At this stage society is completely commercialized. Land, like labour, has become a commodity. Society thus at last comes to consist of two opposed classes only, the capitalists and the labourers.

Marx does not regret the commercialization of land. The governmental and even paternal relationship of the landowner to the inhabitants under the old primogenitary

system had often possessed a romantic colouring. But private property was its basis however disguised. The means of subsistence, the produce of labour, stood over against the labourer in the possession of another just as does capital in any modern industry. It was both inevitable and desirable that private property should be stripped of its romantic disguise, that land should become a commodity, that the real simplicity of the opposition between capital and labour should be unmasked over the whole field of production. On the land as well as in the town the small man becomes a wage-earner and the wage-earner sinks ever lower into poverty. "This leads to revolution." Private property must continue on its road to ruin, until at last we shall lose faith in it and "learn to believe in man."

Political economy, by which Marx means the bourgeois economists, takes its world for granted. It starts with the assumption of private property without criticizing this assumption. Adam Smith, like the theologians who assume the Fall of Man, invents as a primitive human quality the tendency to barter. Marx will have no such mythical beginnings. He starts with the present fact that the more a worker produces the poorer he is. *Sic vos non vobis*. A man's animal existence is all that his employer needs to buy, and this determines the amount of his wages. The human virtues, love, art, science, the cultivation of gifts manifold, all come out of his product, but not for him. He puts off the man and puts on the machine, becomes the tool of some power not himself that makes for money.

Marx, in his preface, had claimed for Feuerbach the merit of making a critical economics possible. He is applying here two ideas of Feuerbach. One, as we have seen, is the exteriorization of human values, for Feuerbach

in God, for Marx in money. The other is the conception of humanity itself. The specific human quality is consciousness of the species and of its essence. The essence of the human species is that man does not live by bread alone, is not in existence merely to eat, drink and propagate like an animal or an hereditary monarch. For man as man the objects of nature are potential science and art, which make the human nature of non-human things. But of all this specifically human life man is deprived by modern industry. Men become to each other only means to an end, and this destroys their humanity. As a social being man must find in his relation to others the realization of his true self. The only really human work is free activity with consciousness of aim.

This philosophical grounding of political economy was what Marx found wanting in the economists. He found it wanting even in Proudhon. Certainly Proudhon saw that political economy is in contradiction within itself, that it makes labour the soul of production and alienates the product from labour, giving all to private property. But Proudhon satisfies himself with deciding for labour against property. He does not see that the contradiction, the alienation is not merely between the labourer and property, but between the labourer and his work, its produce and himself. Marx therefore judges that so far from a mere forcing up of wages being a solution of the problem, it would not even effect the equalization desired by Proudhon. At best it would make society an abstract capitalist, leaving the worker self-alienated as before. In the real emancipation of the workers the whole of human emancipation is involved. No attempt at amelioration within the system of private property and self-alienation

can succeed. Within that baneful circle of bewitchment political economy is a true prophet and its laws work ever to the same result. The circle is only to be gnawed through by a criticism of the basic assumptions of political economy, by realizing that, when we speak of labour, we are treating of humanity directly.

This is the conclusion of what Marx's editor calls the first manuscript. Of the second manuscript only a fragment has survived. It restates the conclusions of the first manuscript so as to bring out even more emphatically the hostile relation between capitalist and worker, as culminating in the generalization of capital, when all its forms merge into a power of commanding or buying indifferently all kinds of labour, and in the complete alienation of the labourer from himself. Since his essential self does not exist for capital, which only buys his capacity of labour, his real personality no longer exists for himself. It is alienated, that is the means of developing it is alienated, in his product which, becoming capital, is no longer his.

At the beginning of the third manuscript Marx reverts to the parallel between religion and economics. The catholics, the fetish-worshippers of political economy, were the mercantilists who worshipped private property in its material, symbolic, non-human form, in the precious metals. Adam Smith is the Luther of political economy. As Luther made religion subjective in his doctrine of faith, so Adam Smith translated wealth into its subjective form labour. The "cynicism" of political economy is that the labourer, being unable to separate himself from his labour, must sell himself for the market-price of his labour. Labour as man, as labourer, is the subjective form of property, and is excluded from property.

In the section on *Private property and communism* we follow a parallel development in the theory of the negation of this self-alienation, in socialism. Proudhon corresponds to the mercantilists, the catholics. He desires to abolish private property, but sees only its objective form. He says "property is theft." Fourier, like the physiocrats, fixes his attention on land, which is intermediary between bullion and labour since it is a more generalized form of wealth than the bullion of the mercantilists and more closely connected with labour. St. Simon sees the essence of labour in industrial labour. This is an advance and he wants to improve the lot of the labourer, but under a purely industrial government. He does not pass beyond the system of private property.

Then comes communism, which Marx distinguishes from socialism. "Crude communism" is simply the negation of private property. Material property looms so large in its power over human life that the crude communist can see nothing else. Making a violent abstraction of talent, of mental wealth, he considers only what can, as private property, be distributed to all. This is a negation of private property within the system of private property. It is only the exclusive form of private property that is abolished; the generalized essence of it remains. Marriage is changed into prostitution. Such communism denies, like private property, in every sphere the personality of man. It simply expresses the envious and levelling spirit against larger masses of private property. It is private in spirit, and if it is perhaps not strictly accurate to call it a system of private property, then, says Marx, we must consider it as something lower, in which we have still a self-alienated, a dehumanized man without social aims.

But this crude communism is only the negative form, the denial of private property, that is, since we have to use Hegelian language with Marx, the negative form of private property. We have to come to a synthesis, to negate the negation of private property. The positive and negative forms of private property must, by the negation of the negative form, yield to a synthesis in which the whole dehumanized man of private property is abolished and the human essence of man is reasserted. This last form of communism is socialism, the perfected humanism, the perfected naturalism. It is the genuine solution of the conflict between man and nature, man and humanity, between freedom and necessity, individual and species. It is the conscious answer to the riddle of history. Its liberation of man in the economic sphere involves his liberation in other spheres, in religion, family, state, law, morality, science and art. These all now become affirmations instead of denials of man's nature as a human being, as a social and spiritual being. Marx writes of a return of man from religion, family and so forth into his human, social existence. But it is a positive, not a negative abolition of them, an abolition of self-alienation in them, a transcendence of them retaining all their values as human values. To finish the religious parallel, atheism corresponds to crude communism. Its philanthropy is abstract, negative, merely negating humanity's self-alienation in God. The true philanthropy of the perfected and positive communism or socialism is itself positive and pregnant with deeds. It not only denies God, but recovers the human values for man.

Only as a social being is man capable of self-realization. Man creates himself as a social being, and so creates his

fellow-men. They are there for each other and by means of each other, and only as whole men, not as when driven down to the level on which only animal needs are satisfied, but active in knowledge and virtue; alive to art, they humanize external nature by scientific and artistic assimilation or spiritualization. Society and the individual must not be thought of as mere abstractions, so as to become in idea mutually exclusive. Considered so they both cease to exist. It is of the essence of their relation that it be a conscious one. The sense of kind is the confirmation of the reality of community, whose life it repeats in thought. To use the suggestive Hegelian language of Marx, only in self-consciousness is the social existence there "for itself." When Marx says that thought and existence are distinct but in a unity, he is not merely stating a truism; the social organism in each of its forms is only in existence when the individual has the corresponding consciousness, and the converse is equally true.

Private property has so maimed and blunted our consciousness that we can think of our relation to the world only in the form of possession, not as a relation of physical and spiritual enjoyment. The *positive* negation of private property, the transcending as opposed to the mere abolition or *negative* negation of it, is the assertion and emancipation of all human senses and faculties. The eye becomes a human eye; the object seen is seen humanly and socially. Wants and enjoyment have lost their egoistic nature and utility has become human utility. The natural sciences attain their true relation to philosophy, without which they have merely enhanced the dehumanization of man.

The next section is on *need, production and the division*

of labour. Within the system of private property a man's needs are the means by which his neighbour impoverishes him by inducing him to spend. The more need my neighbour has of the commodities I can supply the more of his labour must he sacrifice to me. Labour has been so exploited through its wants that it can only afford to have very few wants. This is one of the contradictions inherent in political economy, the contradiction of wantlessness and increased production. The true end of human activity is lost; the means becomes the end; money becomes the end—money the self-alienated form of labour. In a socialistic system, where work is the free activity of personality, means and ends are scarcely to be distinguished. The work is part of the well-being. In any association for freely willed activity towards an end recognized as noble, fellowship is both means and end. It was in this connection that Marx wrote, on the subject of the revolutionary societies in Paris, the enthusiastic sentences quoted at the close of the previous chapter.

But though the real welfare of a community cannot be attained within the system of private property, the whole historical process has been necessary. For "precisely in the fact that division of labour and exchange are phenomena of private property lies the twofold proof that human life needed private property for its realization, and that now it needs to transcend private property."

A brief section of the manuscript deals with money, showing its command of all human powers in a world based on private property and its utter irrelevance in a community where men count as men, love counts as love, art as art, science as science.

Finally comes the philosophical summing up of the

whole subject in a commentary on certain passages from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind.* Hegel's errors have, according to Marx, been exposed by Feuerbach, who showed in religion first how humanity has transferred itself to a plane of unreality. In Hegel's philosophy the transference is to logical abstractions. Hegel nowhere affirms a positive concrete life, since the absolute spirit, having projected itself in nature, makes the whole process by which it returns to itself, that is the whole life-process of all things and all men, a series of negations of negations, and this is essentially an abstract conception or rather a world of abstractions. The Absolute itself, from which Hegel starts, is, "in logical terms, an infinite, abstract universal. In popular terms he starts from religion and theology."

He negates the infinite and affirms the "actual, sensible, real, finite, particular." This is philosophy, transcendence of religion and theology. But then he negates this positive. That is, he reaffirms religion and theology. "Feuerbach understands the negation of negation only as a contradiction of the philosophy with itself, a philosophy which affirms religion and theology after having denied them." And Marx, we saw, has a similar view of it. Crude communism as a mere negation of a negation is still entangled in its opposite, still infected with the spirit of private property. And Hegel's concepts, into which he resolves man, nature, reality, are but the "money of the mind." The "absolute knowledge" in which his gigantic system culminates is a "masquerade of the real objects of knowledge, just as his idea of the Prussian government as the ideal state was a fantastic masquerade of the actual Prussian government."

Not that Marx denies the greatness of Hegel, which consists in his having conceived the nature of man as the resultant of a process by which his humanity has, in the form of work, been exteriorized and reappropriated. Work, negation and the historical character of their logic are recognized by Hegel, and it is a mighty achievement. His limitation is that he places the whole process in the logical mind, so that everything is predicated of concepts instead of concepts being predicated of man as the true subject. What Marx calls Hegel's "one-sidedness" is his treatment of the logical as the substantial.

It is only as the object of human consciousness that a thing is a thing, the externalization of that consciousness. In being conscious of it, however, man reintegrates in himself that part of the consciousness externalized in the thing. He does this with his senses. But with Hegel the organs of sense belong not to a man but to an abstraction or human consciousness. The self-consciousness has eyes, the self-consciousness has ears, and so forth. The truth according to Marx, the thoroughgoing naturalism which, distinct from materialism as well as from idealism is yet the unifying truth of them both, is stated as follows: "When the actual, bodily, human being, standing on the firm globe of this solid Earth, and inhaling and exhaling all the powers of nature, when this human being posits or affirms actual, objective faculties, thus in consciousness separating them from himself, then it is not the act of so positing or affirming that is the agent. . . . The act creates objects only because that which performs the act is . . . an objective, natural being." This being is man in his immediate self, not as dependent for his existence upon the activity of a mind in which he might be cognized or thought.

The relation of objectivity is mutual to this extent that a being which has no objects of its consciousness is not itself objective, that is, it is not real; it is non-essential. The absolute spirit realizes itself by positing nature, the world of existence as external objects for itself. But Hegel takes away the reality of these objects, nature and man, in the process of bringing them, as mere abstractions, back into the creative consciousness. And if they become unreal the absolute spirit becomes unreal for want of objectivation. By making the Absolute everything he has made it nothing. Marx accepts the validity of Hegel's logic as logic. In the logic Being, as a concept, is transcended by the concept of Existence, and if the thinking process is carried further the concept of Essence results in the concept of Conceptual Thought itself, which finally leads to the Absolute Idea. But all this is abstract thought, and Hegel has undertaken to explain objective reality. He therefore now makes the Absolute Idea negate itself, since the whole process of mind is negation and negation of negation. The negation of idea is non-idea, reality, nature. Marx denies that this last step takes Hegel beyond the region of abstract thought any more than the earlier ones did. He has only the mere feeling that he has passed out of his abstract world. It is a mystical feeling. Its proper name is boredom, "the longing for something real to think about."

The moral of the story is that if we wish to arrive at any knowledge of real nature and real men we must start with real nature and real men as they are found in experience, in real life.

This part of the manuscript is of the nature of an appendix. It throws light on what goes before, the parallel

between Ricardian political economy and Hegel's philosophy. Both political economy and philosophy have impoverished and dehumanized human life, made it unreal, by treating abstractions, in the one case money, in the other concepts, "the money of the mind," as the ultimate realities.

CHAPTER IX

THE HOLY FAMILY

The manuscripts summarized in the previous chapter were the chief work of the summer of 1844. There were besides two short articles in *Vorwärts*, the paper of the German revolutionary exiles in Paris. The earlier of the two articles registers the definite breach with Ruge, who had not followed Marx into socialism. The difference of views was embittered by a difference of temperament. The intimates of Marx were Heine and Herwegh, neither of whom was congenial to the increasingly respectable and business-like spirit of Ruge. In the matter of the Franco-German Year-books Ruge treated Marx shabbily. Financially the publication, owing to its suppression in Germany, was a complete failure, and Marx, who had counted on a salary as editor, was fobbed off with the unsold copies, although Ruge himself was now well to do.

When the distress of the Silesian weavers led to their famous rising of 1844, the King of Prussia issued an order on the duty of society to the poor, and Ruge, in *Vorwärts*, a comment on the order. Frederic William blamed his officials for neglect and ordered them to encourage all societies for the relief of poverty. He asked for a united effort of "all Christianly beneficent hearts." The French radical paper *La Réforme* greeted the order as showing a presentiment in the king of the great reforms needed by European society. Ruge answered that the German nation was too unpolitical to understand the social problem; at most it took the same view of chronic poverty as of an

occasional drought or famine. The king's appeal to Christian hearts only showed that he, too, had no political sense. Ruge said that Germany was far behind England and France in comprehension of the proletarian problem. There was no "proletarian soul" in Germany. Consequently German rebellions would all be useless and would be suppressed in bloodshed and stupidity. The political peoples of France and England would take the lead in social reform.

To Marx this was a thoroughly silly article of his friend Ruge. He quarrelled with nearly the whole of it. But his radical objection was to the assumption that the social problem was primarily political, that it could be dealt with by the existing state. He admitted the political progress of France and England. But neither the Convention nor Napoleon, nor yet the English poor law from Elizabeth onwards, had done more than show the utter impossibility, by any administrative measures within the system of private property, or by any effort of personal benevolence, of preventing the progressive separation of the labourer from the fruits of his labour or the growth of unemployment. Perhaps the most important passages in Marx's article are those on the state. The more political the political mind is the more helpless is it in face of the social problem, because the state expresses the abstraction by which man is brought into contradiction with himself, the general idea of man with his individual existence. Ruge is demanding that the social revolution have a merely political soul. This yields either pure nonsense or a merely political revolution. The incapacity of the political mind to understand poverty is shown in England by attributing poverty to the laws of nature discovered

by Malthus or else to the malice of the poor. The same incapacity is shown when each political party, both in France and England, attributes all social trouble to the bad policy of the opposing political party. Neither recognizes that a society based on private property needs more than a political renewal. And Germany, so helpless politically, is, Marx thinks, for that very reason, more open to the social truth. In Weitling's *Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom* he recognizes a depth of insight and a promise which even Proudhon, with all his literary superiority, does not manifest.

With Proudhon Marx now came into frequent personal contact and was able to satisfy in large measure the Frenchman's thirst for instruction in the philosophy of Hegel. He saw much, too, of Bakunin. But above all the time had now arrived when the co-operation of Engels began to be of supreme importance. Not since the mythical times of Achilles and Patroclus, scarcely excepting Harmodius and Aristogeiton, has a personal friendship had such great results. Engels saw Marx first in November, 1842. He had just finished his military year in Berlin, where he had frequented the doctor-club in which Marx was still a most vivid memory. There were striking contrasts between the two lives. Marx had spent his childhood in sleepy, historic Trier, the son of a philosophic Jew with official occupation and connections. Engels had been born in the manufacturing area of Barmen-Elberfeldt, the son of a somewhat narrow pietist, and, instead of the university, he could look back on the counting-house, though, when he was a soldier in Berlin, he went to lectures in the university and had as his associates the circle which Marx, a few months earlier,

had left on going to Bonn. Engels was, in a literary point of view, a product of young Germany and had written in Gutzkow's *Telegràf für Deutschland.* His early enthusiasms were romantic, for German folklore and medieval chivalry. His early portraits show a resemblance to those of Robert Louis Stevenson, and there is more than a facial resemblance. Politically Engels was at first a disciple of the patriotic radical Börne. He was a gay and gallant young boon companion with a secret history of religious struggles behind him, having broken links by which Marx had never been bound. Like Marx he had not in youth experienced poverty. Unlike Marx he never did experience it. He was a very clever linguist, a good writer of Greek verse at school, and had won his spurs in philosophy with two pamphlets in which the young Hegelians considered he had demolished Schelling and avenged the shade of Hegel for the profanation of his chair.

His first reception by Marx was cool. He had come to Cologne at a time when the editor of the Rhenish Gazette was seriously at odds with the "Free Ones" of Berlin. He came straight from their atmosphere and presumably as their friend and partisan. He was more cordially received by Moses Hess, who converted him to communism. Engels was then, 1842, on his way to England, where he was to continue his commercial career in Manchester. His new socialism was intensified and documented by his study of the working class in England, a subject on which he sent important letters to the Rhenish Gazette. In his experience of modern industrialism he was in advance of Marx and he had perhaps the readier pen. His contributions to the Franco-German Year-books were most valuable, an attack on the current

political economy and a description of industrial England in a review of Carlyle's *Past and Present*. For English readers he wrote in Owen's *New Moral World*, giving them accounts of continental socialism. Marx and Engels met for the second time in August 1844, this time, too, in Paris. In the course of some ten days' discussion they established the complete mutual understanding which was never to be broken so long as they both lived.

The first work in which they collaborated was the *Holy Family*, a diatribe against the "critical criticism" of Bruno Bauer and company. The organ of these "critical critics" was the *General Gazette for Literature*, in the eighth number of which appeared an attack on Marx. Marx and Engels, who were together in Paris in the early September of 1844, decided to retaliate. Engels wrote his part of the *Holy Family*, a very small portion of the whole, before leaving for Germany. During their separation Marx turned the intended pamphlet into a book of considerable size, and the whole was published in February, 1845, in Frankfort-on-the-Main.

The original right and left dichotomy of the Hegelians had been followed by a schism of the left. Some followed, in the main, Feuerbach, and among these was Marx. The most distinguishable figures in another group are the three Bauers, Bruno, Edgar and Egbert, the Holy Family with their shadowy attendants Reichardt the publisher and the officer Zychlinski, who, under the pseudonym of Szeliga, wrote some of the articles now attacked by Marx and Engels. A third party was constituted by Caspar Schmidt, alias Max Stirner, whose book on the ego, just out, was read by Marx during the writing of the *Holy Family*.

The Bauers had developed even more one-sidedly the one-sidedness of Hegel. Their god was the human critical faculty, impersonated, for the present, chiefly in themselves. Over against them was the mass, human and non-human, in whom consciousness existed as yet in an unconscious form. The redemption of the mass was to be effected by criticizing it. They did not make Hegel's mistake of attributing to the existing state the qualities of the Absolute. But they did commit the equivalent fault of doing nothing outside their own skulls to alter matters. They were in one respect far worse than Hegel. They saw in the mass, that is in the lives of most people, in society, in the proletariat, no form of the Absolute, of mind, of value at all.

The first part of the *Holy Family* is devoted to the subject of Proudhon, grossly mishandled by the critical critics and especially by brother Edgar. Proudhon, although he had recently published his ambitious work the *Creation of Order in Humanity*, was chiefly known throughout Europe by *What is Property?* published in 1840. Marx attacks Edgar Bauer's translations from this book on account both of their carelessness and of the way in which the French is rendered into a German savouring of the critical criticism.

Marx in Paris was often with Proudhon, and was not the only source from which Proudhon made acquaintance with Hegelian dialectic. Karl Grün, the utopian socialist, tried to persuade him to play the part of a French Feuerbach, and Bakunin treated him to long draughts of the intoxicating doctrine. But before he met any of these, and apparently without ever reading Hegel, Proudhon had applied what he regarded as dialectical method to the

exposition of economics. The thesis was primitive community, the antithesis property, and the synthesis was yet to be found.

The dialectic of Proudhon cannot at any time have impressed Marx, but in the *Holy Family* he attributes great importance to *What is Property?* He might well do so. He found here vague shadows of his own doctrines to come, a development of Adam Smith's labour theory of value, a precursor to Marx's own theory of surplus-value, inasmuch as Proudhon showed that value was a social product monopolized by the individual employer. He found a theory of conflicting classes and an economic interpretation of history. "Wars of religion and conquest," wrote Proudhon, "when they did not go to the extent of exterminating races, were only accidental perturbations, and were soon compensated in the strictly mathematical progress in the life of peoples." The real cause of all revolutions, their "generating principle," has been property, with its exclusion of the majority from possession. Like Marx, Engels and Hess, Proudhon saw revolution ahead. "In the multitude of secret causes by which the peoples are agitated, there is none more powerful, more regular and more unmistakable than the periodic explosions of the proletariat against property." Proudhon's theories were certainly superseded now by the writers in the Franco-German Year-books, and especially by Engels in his essay, *Outlines of a Criticism of Political Economy*. But this later advance would have been impossible without *What is Property?* which, said Marx, occupies the same place in economics that Siéyès' *What is the Third Estate?* occupies for politics. "All developments of political economy presuppose private property," and

Proudhon is the first to criticize this basis, though he tries to solve the problem within the system of private property.

For Proudhon the fundamental social principle is equality. It was to protect the weaker from the stronger and so to preserve to him the instruments and objects of his labour that private property was introduced. But such is the perverse, dialectical nature of things that it has contradicted its original purpose. Edgar Bauer, from the serene level of the critical criticism, where, as Marx says, he enjoys "the peace of understanding," proclaims that it is only necessary to understand the unity of poverty and property to abolish both. Marx derides the introduction of so theological a device as external agency and declares that they abolish themselves. It is the "movement" of private property and the resultant poverty, its negation, that must lead to the supersession of both. He is here more Hegelian than Bauer, but Hegelian only in an inverted, empirical way, conceiving the dialectical movement of history as if it were a system of natural laws to be found by observation and hypotheses, not as a law by which the process of the world's history could be constructed *a priori*, whereas Bauer adopts only the subjective side of Hegelian reality. According to Marx the system by which all things, including labour, have become commodities has led to the destitution of the proletariat. Property, the wealthy class, is the positive side of the contradiction. The negative side is destitution, the proletariat, forced by competition to lead a less than human life. The contradiction will not be overthrown by the positive or satisfied side of it. It is always the negative side of a contradiction that is progressive, and that by

being destructive. But it is not merely destructive. If poverty, as proletariat, wins in the struggle, it does not simply put itself in the place of the vanquished and destroyed side. It abolishes both, transcending them on a higher level. Marx repeats here in a more dialectical form the theory of the proletarian revolution which he had stated in the Franco-German Year-books. The proletariat can only abolish its own poverty, abolish itself as poverty, by abolishing private property, the cause of poverty. But private property is not only the cause of the utter destitution of the proletarian. It is, since the disappearance of feudalism, the cause of all degrees of destitution and all inequalities of society whatsoever, being the root and beginning of the whole economic development. So Marx arrives again at his proposition that in the proletarian revolution all other revolutions are included.

Edgar Bauer was astonished that Proudhon, after introducing property as the means of equality, should, in the name of equality, wish to abolish property. Marx replies that Proudhon's dialectic is paralleled by Bruno Bauer's. If self-consciousness was the all-creating principle it must have created the mass, the un-self-conscious, which, nevertheless, it aimed at abolishing. Marx goes further and identifies equality with the self-consciousness. At least he says that equality is the French and political equivalent to the German and philosophical self-consciousness, since the true nature of man, if he be conscious of it, gives him a consciousness of the principle of human equality. But the Bauers cannot recognize their own doctrine in the only form in which it has any human reality. That is because they have not understood Feuer-

bach, who put living reality in the place of self-consciousness.

Proudhon's merit is, then, to have criticized for the first time the accepted basis of political economy, namely private property. His limitation is that he has not done so from outside the realm of political economy itself.

The essence of political economy as the science of private property is that in it the non-human is taken as fundamental in human life. Property is labour as the self-alienation of the labourer, as passing into other hands and exercising a despotic power over him, or even excluding him from the means of subsistence. Now Proudhon, though he is for abolishing private property, retains the principle of possession. A man must be able to occupy and possess the means of production, though beyond its use for this purpose he is to have no monopoly of it. Marx objects that to make possession the basis and principle of human relations—and Proudhon calls possession a social function—is to place the principle and basis of the human in the non-human, in possessions.

Proudhon followed Adam Smith in taking the time of labour as measuring the value of the product. Bauer objects to this criterion for the odd reason that prescription, that is time, gives no right of property. But, as Marx points out, Proudhon does not recognize private property. For him, therefore, rent and interest do not count. The only constituent of exchange-value left is then labour, and Adam Smith is quoted to confirm the statement that under such conditions time is the measure of value, so that price and wage are of the same amount. Bauer particularly rejected the measure by time in the case of works of genius. Marx replied that unless they

took time they were only imaginary works of genius, existed only in the self-consciousness. In any case the cost of production is measured by the time spent in production, and this gives the natural price.

Marx credits Proudhon with being the first to point out that whereas the total productions of associated labour far exceed in value the total of the wages earned in it, the labourers will not be able to pay the price of the goods they have made. The part of the produce they cannot buy is enjoyed by the capitalist and the part they must buy in order to live takes their wages. In other words, Proudhon asserts and Marx approves the doctrine of the right to the whole produce of labour.

The fifth chapter of the *Holy Family* transports us suddenly from Proudhon to Eugene Sue. Nobody, not even Dickens, ever made so sensational an attack on social abuses by means of a work of fiction as did Sue in his prodigious romance *The Mysteries of Paris*. A German prince disguised as a workman—he is of the tribe of Haroun-al-Raschid and Prince Florizel—rescues a beautiful child by means of his superior pugilism from a pugilistic blackguard, who, however, has a better nature. This better nature being hammered into life, the villain becomes the faithful, zealous and indeed heroic agent of the secret philanthropy of his conqueror. Their life becomes a desperate hidden battle with all the banded underworld of crime, against the dark powers of the dim Alsatias of Paris and secret wealthy employers of those horrifying banditti. The earthly providence, the princely Sherlock Holmes, has a limitless banking account. In the end all the monsters are destroyed and the fair little heroine is vindicated as the long lost daughter of her

rescuer. But she feels herself to have been soiled by her early associations, refuses a lofty marriage, becomes an abbess and dies of consumption. Prison reform, bankruptcy, with acknowledgments to Fourier, prostitution, all the problems of capitalistic civilization, all come in for treatment without spoiling the story, since at every moment at least one of the characters is on some dizzy brink. Never were sentimentality and violence more potently mingled. That the critical critics should write a long philosophical interpretation of this book is a singular example of the way life can avenge itself upon abstract thought. *Naturam expellas*, etc.; Marx's criticism is not merely an attack on the critical critics. It is an attack upon the gospel implied in the novel itself. And the critical critics were right in fastening upon this novel. For although at first sight so much vivid life seems to be the opposite of their world of unrealities, the novel of Sue does translate into concrete form a philosophy of dehumanization.

The critically critical interpretation of the *Mysteries of Paris* was written by the Bauers' friend Szeliga, alias Lieutenant Zychlin von Zychlinski. Marx begins the attack on him by showing that the logic of the Bauers is at best an intellectual pastime. To understand their game, and Marx's exploitation of it, we must understand the different meanings of the word "mystery." They found in Feuerbach the notion that certain Christian doctrines were mysteries in the sense that when stripped of their mystic form an anthropological truth was revealed. The mystery, or secret, of the suffering God is, according to Feuerbach, the secret of human sensibility. The sentence "God is a being endowed with sensibility" is only the

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religious, mystical or mystifying way of saying that sensibility is divine. Szeliga's use of the word is different. Human beings are not for the critical critics the ultimate reality. Abstractions are the ultimate reality. Therefore the reality of apples and pears is fruit. We only get apples and pears by negating the abstract reality of fruit. This conception is applied to the novel, as Marx tells us, in the following way. "Whereas Herr Szeliga has resolved actual relationships, for instance law and civilization, into the category of mystery, and so has made 'mystery' the subject, he rises for the first time to the Hegelian level and changes 'mystery' into an independent subject, which incarnates itself in actual situations and persons. The expressions of its life are countesses, grisettes, porters, notaries, charlatans, love intrigues, dances, wooden doors, etc. After he has produced the category 'mystery' out of the real world, he produces the real world out of this category." According to this account Szeliga's equivocal use of the word is: The apples and pears are the mystical representation of the reality fruit. They are also incarnations of mystery. Everything real is made a mystery, and mystery rather arbitrarily incarnates itself in real things as simulacra of itself. Such are not the mysteries of Feuerbach, though they are perhaps the illegitimate offspring of his mysteries in critically critical minds. But they have a close analogy with the mysteries of Paris, or of Eugene Sue. Sue's characters are self-alienated and dehumanized, and indeed twice over; once by being made the puppets of a moral lesson or idea, and again by having the soul taken out of them by their relations with their earthly providence Rudolf, Prince of Geroldstein.

Marx gives several instances, however, in which Sue obviously means one thing by a character, whilst Szeliga chooses the same character to represent some quite different mystery. The mystery of love, for Szeliga, at least of unlawful love, is sensuality. And he takes this to be incarnated in a certain Countess MacGregor in the story. But the author of the book has made the countess the most cold-blooded of schemers, and moreover had explicitly declared that the real mystery of unlawful love is joy in the forbidden, not sensuality at all.

Leaving Szeliga and the twin mysteries of Paris and of criticism, with a promise to return to them, Marx devotes his long sixth chapter to a direct attack on Bruno Bauer, in the course of which we catch glimpses of a Marxian theory of history. Bauer's conception of history is attacked as a pure abstraction. For Bauer history is the self-demonstration of truth. Not man but Truth is the actor in the drama. Truth is an automaton that proves itself. Man exists in order that Truth may come to self-consciousness. Truth arrives at self-consciousness in the critics, who are separated with categorical completeness from the unillumined "mass." In attacking this bloodless ghost of history Marx, though prolific in logical distinctions, is not thinking of logic alone. "Because truth," he writes, "like history, is an ethereal subject, and separated from the mass, it does not address itself to the empirical man, but to the 'innermost of the soul,' and in order to be truly experienced it does not approach man in his coarse body down somewhere in an English cellar or up in a French attic, but progresses through the lengths of his idealistic entrails." Correcting Bauer's confusion of ideas and interests in history, he points out that in the

French revolution the ideas put forth extended far beyond the scope of the interests of the bourgeoisie which alone ultimately triumphed. "If then the Revolution, which may stand here for all great historical actions, failed, it failed because the 'mass' within whose conditions of life it remained was an exclusive and a confined 'mass,' not one that embraced the whole community; not because the 'mass' was interested and enthusiastic for the Revolution, but because that part of the mass which is distinct from the bourgeoisie did not find in the principles of the Revolution its real 'interest,' its own proper revolutionary principle, but only an 'idea,' therefore only the object of a momentary enthusiasm and only an apparent elevation." So far from the ideas as ideas being the effective part of history, it was only such ideas as were embodied in a policy based on actual conditions and powers that could be realized.

Bauer's "mass" was a mere abstraction, a mere negation of criticism. His doctrine of progress is accordingly a mere continuous absorption of mass into ideas. Marx holds up in contrast the far more satisfying and significant views of progress taken by communistic writers such as Fourier and Owen, who have seen that actual progress has been steadily hostile to the mass of men, driving them deeper into poverty and a dehumanized existence. But so far from light and truth being separated from that mass, they are incorporated in those very men who are, in the light of this socialistic or communistic criticism, the moving spirit of the mass. "One must have learned to know the studies, the intellectual hunger . . ."

Another contemporary application is Marx's parallel between the philosophical exclusiveness of the Bauers and

the political "doctrinaire" party of Guizot and the upper-class constitutionalists.

Passing over those sections of the sixth chapter in which the difference between Marx and Bauer is developed in a way more interesting to the student of Bauer than to the student of Marx, we come to the section headed *Critical Battle against the French Revolution.* No period of history had been more carefully studied by Marx. He saw in the failure of Robespierre and St. Just the result of anachronistic and purely political ideals. They had always in mind the slave-holding republics of Athens and Rome. The economic realities of French society were below their horizon. They tried by means of the Terror to force upon their nation a unity based on republican virtue, when the real principle of unity was mutual economic need and utility. They, however, made a genuine contribution to progress by shattering the framework of feudalism and releasing potentially the free competitive industry and commerce of the succeeding age. Attempting to impose on a new world the fetters of the idealized state as an end in itself, they were overthrown by the middle class, which, under the Directory, transformed the potential liberation of economic forces into an actual liberation. Napoleon represents a last fight of the Terror, the state for its own sake, against the growing power of the bourgeoisie. Though he recognized the capitalist basis of society, he attempted to exploit it for the sake of political power, his own and the state's. "He perfected the Terror in replacing perpetual revolution by perpetual war." In revenge the commercial and industrial magnates "prepared the events that shattered his power. Parisian stock-jobbers forced him by an artificial famine

to delay the opening of his Russian campaign for nearly two months, and thus to undertake it in too advanced a season of the year." Finally the bourgeoisie obtained in 1830 what they had aimed at in 1789. But "the life-story of the French Revolution is not ended in 1830, when one of its factors, enriched with the consciousness of its social significance, gained the victory."

The next section, *Critical Battle with French Materialism*, traces, from English and French materialistic philosophy, the genealogy of socialism. The idealistic schools of the seventeenth century, of Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz, made place for materialism as the Hegelian school was succeeded by Feuerbach. The breakdown of idealism in the seventeenth century was prepared by Bacon, who freed natural science from scholasticism, and was furthered by the parallel achievement of Bayle, who freed morality from theology. These works of negation were followed by the positive systems of Locke and his pupil Condillac, who, grounding knowledge in the senses, commenced the process completed in various spheres by Helvétius, Holbach, Diderot and other materialists.

Thought was on a thoroughly empirical basis by the end of the eighteenth century, and certain corollaries to the philosophy of experience were widely accepted. It is, for instance, an idea common to Adam Smith, Hume and some of the French thinkers that character and ability are formed by environment, and that men are all fairly equal in natural capacity. Innate ideas were dead and Darwinism was not yet born. The widespread assumption of equality and of the omnipotence of environment, together with a recognition of the right to enjoyment, led, in a world becoming industrialized and disappointed with

merely political revolution, naturally to socialism. Marx himself draws, in the sphere of penology, the conclusion that the true way to eradicate crime is to abolish the environment that makes it inevitable. He points out, further, that Mandeville's brilliant defence of all the vices on the ground of their utility in existing society is the reverse of a justification of existing conditions. Finally, he illustrates the growth of socialism out of materialism in the transition from Bentham to Owen, remarking that, whilst Fourier is directly related to the older French materialists, Owen influenced Cabet.

The seventh chapter of the *Holy Family* is mainly devoted to comparisons between Bauer and Hegel and to aspects of the critical criticism which illustrate its unreality. It throws no fresh light on the growth of Marx and is rather a dancing over the slain than a real intellectual duel. In the eighth chapter we are brought back to the *Mysteries of Paris*. It has already been shown that the critical criticism took the characters of that novel as incarnations and symbols, revelations of mysteries and mystical representations of abstract realities. The greatest revelation of all the mysteries is the hero, Prince Rudolf of Geroldstein. If all the mysteries be conceived as expressions of the abstract idea of mystery, then Rudolf is the incarnation and unveiling of this mystery of mysteries. To accompany him as he goes among the other characters is to have the heart of all their mysteries torn out; they are not themselves, they represent mysteries.

The tamed ruffian, Le Chourineur, is a simple-minded fellow, not really bad-hearted but of passionate temperament and fallen into bad ways. The magic words by which the prince restores his self-respect are, "You have a heart

and a sense of honour." But these qualities are immediately and permanently prostituted in a devotion to the benefactor which the Chourineur himself describes as that of a bull-dog. He becomes a mere instrument of the plans of his earthly providence, a puppet of magic words, a sub-human vessel of the spirit, a type of "mass" under the operations of critical criticism.

Worse if possible is the destiny of the heroine, Fleur de Marie. She, too, starts as a wholesome child of nature. Her heart and intelligence, the poetry of her delicate spirit, remain essentially unspoiled even after she has grown up from infancy in the den of crime and vice into which she was kidnapped. Rescued by Rudolf, and taken from Paris into the country, she shows her passionate love of the beauties of nature. But here again Sue plays into the hands of the critical critics. She has to symbolize the ineradicable nature of evil, the nothingness of life compared with the idea, the impossibility of washing out the taint incurred in early surroundings. Placed in the care of an elderly clergyman and of a pious woman, she is carefully imbued with a sense of sin and is made to feel that the suffering of repentance must be her lot on earth until the end. In compensation she will have endless joy in heaven. Her life is accordingly a denial of life, her religion a denial of the reality of human goodness and her end as a nun the only fitting expression of her critically critical significance. She is so pure an example of the divorce between life and truth in Bauer's philosophy that her only possible place in the story is that which she occupies, namely the position of daughter to the mystery of mysteries, Rudolf himself. Or rather, says Marx, she should have been his mother, since Bauer resembles Hegel

in making the result of everything its cause, the absolute spirit, which really is an abstraction from reality.

Still richer psychologically is the lesson of the villains and of the manner of their punishment. Rudolf their punisher is so completely representative of the critical criticism that all human virtue has been drained out of him into concepts, and left his heart a den of the most egoistic passions of revenge and hatred. What in religion is the doctrine of sin becomes in jurisprudence a doctrine of retribution and purgation. Rudolf has captured the chief of the kidnappers and brigands, a Hercules in strength but known as the Schoolmaster because better educated than his accomplices. To kill him would be an unfitting penalty for his crimes, too easy a requital of the suffering he has inflicted. It would, moreover, rob him of time for repentance. He is therefore blinded, shut up in a darkness where is nothing but horrible memories and abject repentance until the end of his days. At the same time the novel shows quite clearly that Rudolf is really acting, both in this and other cases, from a perfectly fiendish desire for vengeance. Eugene Sue, if a bad moralist, is too profound a psychologist not to supply Marx with weapons against both the morality of the romance and the critical critics' adaptation of it. In Marx's interpretation the prince's "whole character can be summed up as 'pure' hypocrisy, by which the outbreaks of his wicked passions are represented to himself and others as outbreaks against the passions of the wicked." It is not in himself but in others that Rudolf von Geroldstein fights and expiates his evil impulses and the deeds to which they have prompted him.

On similar grounds of ethics to those on which Gerold-

stein blinds his victim, Sue fills the prison-chapters of his criminal romance with arguments for solitary confinement, which at that time was being debated as penal reform in the French Chambers. Marx, who had for his time an astonishing insight into the psychology of unconscious or disguised motivation and of compensatory outlets and transferences of passion, advocated a penology more modern and humane. "The four Dutch agricultural colonies, the penal colony at Ostwald in Alsace, are genuine humane efforts in contrast with the blinding of the Schoolmaster," he writes. The blinded criminal in the novel becomes an excellent refutation of the theory of his punishment as well as of the separation between idea and reality effected in the critical criticism. The scene in which he subsequently murders his accomplice, an old woman who has betrayed him, is a grotesque and ghastly parody of that in which he is blinded by the executioners of Rudolf. He has had his remorse in plenty and has seen in his darkness the avenging ghosts of his victims. But this translunary and conceptual repentance does not prevent him from executing his own revenge in the same fiendish spirit in which he has himself been punished, and with similar protestations of a lofty motive.

But there is another group of characters, wealthy aristocrats of luxurious life who are engaged in works of bourgeois charity, splendours to match the miseries in these mysteries of Paris. The chief of these is Clarence de Harville, whom matrimonial misfortune has placed in a dangerous moral and social position. Rudolf is again the earthly providence. Borrowing, as Marx assumes, from Fourier the notion of basing occupation on impulse, Rudolf shows her that all her love of adventure and dis-

simulation can find vent in such works of charity as he is himself engaged in. Together in disguise they learn the piquancy of benevolent adventures among the poor. "Beneficence organized as entertainment" is the sign under which they conduct their business. The cleft between motive and concept is again apparent. It is also apparent that for Sue and his characters the existence of poverty is taken as normal. The fashionable world hold charitable dinners where they eat for the poor, balls and concerts of similar self-denial. They do everything for poverty except abolish it.

In one scene Rudolf indignantly denounces the injustice that punishes a servant for making away with her child but leaves free the employer who has abused his position. "Rudolf's reflections," says Marx, "do not go so far as to subject to his princely criticism the relation itself of master and servant." Far from it, in fact, for the whole social economics of Sue aims at preserving private property intact, and offers help to the poor, working or workless, only as a dependent, patronized class, cultivating its modest virtues out of gratitude to rich benefactors and quite devoid of moral standards of its own, just as life, nature and humanity have no intrinsic value for the critical criticism.

The novel and the philosophy lend themselves to a mode of criticism highly congenial to Marx, a mixture of fantastic and exuberant satire with a superabundance of logic and rich illustrations from history. At the same time his writing shows his increasing knowledge of the existing world, his deepening feeling for the victims of industrialism and his admiration for the self-educated and self-devoted workers whom he was coming to know

personally in Paris. The *Holy Family* is no mere caprice on which he used up superfluous energies in a time of waiting. It is not only the most exuberant of his writings but a work in which we begin to see the shaping of his characteristic teachings. Writing to Engels in April, 1867, the year in which the first volume of *Das Kapital* was finished, he says that he has been again looking into the *Holy Family*. "I was pleasantly surprised," he writes, "to find that we need not be ashamed of that work, although the cult of Feuerbach[6] strikes one very comically now."

CHAPTER X

GERMAN IDEOLOGY

THE *Holy Family* was published at Frankfort late in February, 1845. By that time Marx had left France. The articles in the Paris *Vorwärts* had attracted the malevolent attention of the Prussian government, and Louis Philippe was induced to put an end to them. Had Marx, like others, consented to have no more to do with politics, he might, like them, have been allowed to remain in the country. He arrived in Brussels early in February, 1845, and was soon joined by his wife and daughter.

He found in Belgium another group of German exiles among whom the poet Freiligrath became his life-long friend. Engels, after a campaign of socialism in Germany in the company of Hess, visited Marx in April. From Brussels in the summer of 1845 Marx, accompanied by Engels, paid his first visit to England, where he became acquainted with German revolutionary working men in London. It was in Brussels during 1846 that he first supplemented theory with action as an organizer of communism.

In spite of all that he had written on Hegel, on Feuerbach and on Bruno Bauer and his companions, Marx still felt the need of clarifying his ideas. It was just over two years after his retirement from the Rhenish Gazette when Marx, in April, 1845, expounded to Engels at Brussels the materialistic theory of history already complete in its main outlines. But he seems to have felt that he had not yet finished with the philosophers. At least

he wrote later on, after the failure to publish the long manuscript which he and Engels produced between September, 1845, and October, 1846, that it had, after all, fulfilled its chief purpose, the self-clarification of its writers.

Meanwhile, about March, 1845, Marx wrote down in his notebook eleven theses on Feuerbach. In the first of these he says that the principal defect of all materialisms hitherto, including Feuerbach's, has been that they conceive the object, the world of sense, reality, only under the form of object or percept, not as a human activity in the world of sense, as action. Feuerbach rightly refers all thought to a basis in sense, but he does not recognize the revolutionary activity of this basis.

Marx dismisses as purely scholastic the question whether thought divorced from action and from the life of sense has any reality. The question of practical importance for him is whether the actual thoughts men have are truths of objective fact. "Man must by practice prove the truth, that is the power and reality of his thought, its correspondence to the things of this life."

The materialists believe in the power of environment and of education. They forget that it is man himself who changes the environment and that the teacher must himself be educated. They are driven to solve the problem by assuming a class naturally but statically superior to the class to be educated. They therefore miss the truth as well as the revolutionary character of man, who is developing in a developing environment.

Feuerbach has done well to refer the whole world of religion to its roots in anthropology. If he had realized that man is active and continually changes both himself and society, he would have seen that the truest and most

human theories are always being left in the air by the development of reality. He has, for example, dissolved the Holy Family by showing that it is a reflection of the earthly family. But what of the earthly family? Is it not dissolving itself?

And though in place of the usurping objects of religious worship Feuerbach posits man, which is right as far as it goes, it does not go far enough. For human society is not a generalized individual but the totality of social relationships. Feuerbach has studied men as objects of natural history, whereas men are active beings socially organized and in process of historical development. Even the religious mind, as Feuerbach fails to see, is a social product and belongs to a determinate form of society. All social life is essentially action, and in the understanding of human action all "mysteries" of idealistic philosophy find their solution. By failing to see this, perceptive materialism does not rise above the perception of separate individuals or at most of the existing civil society. Therefore "the point of view of the old materialism is civil society; that of the new is human society or social humanity." The last of the eleven theses is: "Philosophers have but variously interpreted the world; the real task is to alter it."

Of these eleven theses, for the most part paraphrased above, Engels wrote that they were the first writings which contained the germ of the new view of life in its first form as an inspiration of genius.

But it was only a germ. The longer work already mentioned was commenced in September, 1845, after the brief visit to England. Though the final cause of the *German Ideology* was to clear up in its writers' minds all

remaining uncertainties on their position with regard to the existing German philosophies and their own fresh outlook, its efficient or provoking cause was their reading of some polemical articles by Bruno Bauer and Stirner. The first part of it to be written was their immediate answer to these writers, the section entitled "The Leipzic Council." Only at the beginning of 1846 did Marx and Engels take in hand to enlarge and transform it. Marx was reading for a projected work on political economy, which the publisher, who had made him a pecuniary advance, was pressing him to deliver. But Marx's *Criticism of Political Economy* was not to see the light of any year before 1859. Except for fragments the *German Ideology* was not published until 1932, when its reconstruction from the confused, mouse-eaten manuscripts was achieved by Rjazanov.

"It was composed by Engels and me in common," says Marx, "and that for the sake of settling accounts with our former philosophical conscience." The preface simply declares the nature of the errors which the book will expose. The successors of Hegel think to change the world by refuting the religious and superstitious beliefs which man has created and by which he is dominated. They do not see that these ideas emanate from social conditions and depend on them. They spend their time in fighting the shadows of reality.

In the first of the sections on Feuerbach, the section or fragment entitled "Ideology in General and especially the German," the writers define once more their own point of departure. "The first presupposition of all human history is the existence of living human individuals. The first fact to be ascertained is therefore the bodily organi-

zation of these individuals and its relation to the rest of Nature. . . . All historiography must commence from these natural foundations and their modification in the course of history through the action of human beings. Men may distinguish themselves from the animals by consciousness, by religion, by anything else they like. They will begin to distinguish themselves from the animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their bodily organization. . . . What individuals are depends on the material conditions of their production," since "in producing their means of living they are indirectly producing themselves."

The beginning of this production, the increase of the population, presupposes an intercourse of individuals, an intercourse whose form is conditioned in turn by production. The relations between nations depend on the degree of development of their productive powers, the division of labour and internal commerce. And the whole inner structure of a people is determined by the same factors. "Every new productive power, in so far as it is not a mere extension of those already known, such, for example, would be the bringing of fresh land under cultivation, has for its consequence a new development of the division of labour."

"The division of labour within a country first separates industrial and commercial from agricultural work and so brings about the separation of town and country with their contrasted interests." Next comes the separation of commercial from industrial activities, and within each of these the various occupations of different men gradually and concurrently appear. The relative positions of men

depend on the ways in which their occupations are pursued and controlled. The successive stages are those of the patriarchate, slavery, the system of estates in feudal times, and finally classes—and all these steps in the division of labour are forms of property; property in the material, in the instruments and in the products of labour decide the mutual relations of individuals.

What follows is the first summary of the Marxian view of history. The first property is owned by the kin or tribe, at a very low grade of productivity. Here are hunters and fishers with the beginnings of pasture and agriculture. Both the division of labour and the social organization are those of the family expanding into the patriarchal clan. Slavery, which in the family is latent, grows as the population increases, as need becomes more pressing and war and barter with other groups result.

The conditions thus outlined constitute the first form of human society. The second is the ancient city state, born of agreement or conquest, and continuing the employment of slaves. In this form property is at first owned by the community, but in time movable and then landed property came to be privately owned, though private landed property remains the exception and is subordinate to the system of state lands, which carries with it the ownership of slaves by the community. The passing of landed property into private ownership brings about the decay of the whole system since the unifying principle had been joint ownership of the soil and common control of the slaves. Within the cities the division of labour becomes progressively more complex, but the chief division that grows up is that between sea-borne commerce and industry.

War, plunder and brigandage cease, on this view, to be the driving factors in industry. The depopulation of ancient Italy, for example, was due to the concentration of landed property with the decay of the landowning families, the change of arable into pasture and the importation of corn. To the end slavery remains the basis of production in the old world.

The third form of property is feudalism and estates of the realm. Antiquity based itself on the town, the Middle Ages on the country. The Romans had conquered large provinces. During the centuries of Rome's decline the population had become sparse over large areas, whilst contemporaneously enormous powers of production were destroyed in the cities by the barbarian conquerors. Trade was everywhere broken off. All this together with the German military organization gave birth to feudalism, serfs taking the place of slaves, whilst the feudal hierarchy, like the ancient patricians, was banded together for the control of these labourers. To the feudal organization of property in the rural districts corresponded in the towns the corporative system of the gilds, here called the feudal organization of manufacture, with its gradations of master, journeyman and apprentice and its need of association against predatory nobles, its common market halls, its combination of industry and commerce in the same persons. The property of the townsman consisted mainly of his labour, and only very small capitalists existed. There was only very rudimentary division of labour together with firmly drawn social distinctions. The separation of industry from commerce took place at a much later stage in medieval than in ancient times.

To this economic basis of the social organization corre-

sponded its political superstructure. "The combination of large territories into feudal kingdoms was as much a necessity for the feudal nobility as for the towns." All ultimately depends on the productive activities of individuals; ideas and intellectual intercourse are shaped by the speech of daily life and by the realities of economically necessary social organization. "Human consciousness can never be anything but the consciousness of the actual human being." By making ideas the basis, German philosophy has turned everything upside down. We ought not to commence with what men say, imagine, think, but with the men themselves and their doings. We shall then discover that morality, religion and metaphysics, or any other ideologies, have no history, no development except as reflecting human activities. "Consciousness does not determine life but life determines consciousness."

Meanwhile it ought to be noticed that Marx and Engels do not call their doctrine empiricism. The empiric, they tell us, thinks in quite as abstract a manner as the German ideologists, and makes of history a mere collection of isolated facts.

German ideology tries to do without any presuppositions. Marx and Engels require three for the interpretation of history. The first of these, the first historic act, consists in such primal needs as eating, drinking, clothing and housing, and the satisfaction of these needs. The second presupposition is that the satisfaction of these needs produces other needs. The third is the family. The earliest form of co-operation and of the division of labour is that between man and woman in reproducing their kind. These are three aspects of human society always present at every stage, and not three stages of development.

Consciousness is from the first a social product, and speech is its practical, social form, the form in which it exists for others. Speech is the standing form of the dependence of mind on matter. But it is also the distinction of man from the animals, whose consciousness is not social. "For the animal his relation to others does not exist as a relation." Human consciousness is therefore a social product and must be so long as men are men.

"Of course," they continue, "consciousness is at first only a consciousness of the nearest surroundings in the world of sense and consciousness of the very limited combination with other persons and things external to the individual in whom self-consciousness is beginning; it is at the same time consciousness of Nature, which is at first encountered by men as a quite strange, omnipotent and incomprehensible power, to which men are related in a purely animal way, towards which they are as passive as cattle." This is the religion of Nature, a purely animal consciousness. But this religion is at the same time conditioned by the association of human beings with one another, and conditions it. Man's relations with Nature and with other men are mutually dependent and develope together. In early stages both remain within very narrow limits; man can do little to satisfy his demands on Nature and has only a narrow association with his fellows. A development takes place through the increase of population, with increased needs and division of labour.

The division of labour after a certain stage involves a division between physical and mental labour, and so gives rise to religion and philosophy. We have therefore now three factors, the forces or powers of production, the social organization and the consciousness in what we may

perhaps call its separated form. And these three come into contradiction with each other, because the division of labour leads to a division between production and consumption, because work and enjoyment come to be embodied in separate persons and classes of persons. The only way to resolve the contradiction is to find a way of transcending the division of labour, so as to reintegrate human personality. So dialectical remain the thoughts of Marx and Engels. Division of labour produces the family, and separate families. Within the family the women and children are slaves of the father and this crude slavery is the first form of property. "It answers already to the definition of property in the modern economists; it is command over the labour-power of others." Division of labour means private property, the division being in the work and the property in its product. They are "identical expressions." They express the divergence between the interests of each individual or single family. Division of labour may be either automatic and crude or it may be voluntary. So long as the crude form of it imposed by Nature and by uncontrolled social development continues, so long, that is, as private property, which we saw to mean this division of labour, continues, men will continue to see the produce of their labour separated from them and becoming a power in other hands over them. The disregard of the individuals and of personality, which is sometimes alleged against Marxism, had no place in Marx. What he demands above all is to get rid of a system in which every one's personality is disintegrated, or even annihilated by transmutation into a single function. By the division of labour some one exclusive activity is imposed upon each of us if we are to live. One may be

a hunter or fisher or herdsman or even a critical critic, "whereas in the communistic society, where each will have no exclusive circle of action but can form himself in each department at will, society regulates the general production and precisely thereby makes it possible for me to do one thing to-day and another to-morrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon and attend to cattle-breeding in the evening, and after dinner to criticize, all according to my inclinations, without ever becoming a huntsman, fisherman, herdsman or critic."

Happy as this result is, it is not utopian. It is reached by a truly dialectical method. It is not a mere negation of all conditions, a simple flight into the ideal, nor is it a return to the primitive conditions that existed before private property. It is based on the development of productive power during the period of private property, a development enabling private property to be transcended at the next stage. We find a footnote in which housing is taken as an example. The separate economy of the tent for each family existed even among nomads, and civilization made separate dwellings even more necessary. The establishment of communal housekeeping required material conditions, means of production, which did not yet exist. Such means, however, do exist now—water pipes, gas light, steam heating, and everything that overcomes the separation of town and country; common housekeeping has itself become one of the forces of production. Without these conditions people might have lived in common, but it would have been a mere economy of the monastery. And our authors add: "The abolition of separate housekeeping is not to be separated from the abolition of the family."

The separation of the interest of the individual from the common interest leads to the erection of the state as representative and enforcement of this spurious and separate common interest over and against the interest of the individual which is the real common interest of all individuals, and to the division of society into mutually hostile classes. In order to abolish this alienation of the individual from the power which, though based on his social, productive energies, rules him against both his will and his true interest, two conditions must be present. One of these conditions is that the great mass of men must have been reduced to a propertyless condition, so as to feel the power of property over them as an intolerable oppression against which they will undertake a revolutionary struggle. The other necessary condition is the great increase in the productive power itself. Without this last a revolution would bring nothing but universal poverty and the whole cycle of development would start afresh. Production on a large scale implies world-wide commerce. Nor is it sufficient that the above conditions be fulfilled in a single country. Only with high production and with a dispossessed proletariat in many lands at once can a more than transitory communism be established. The communist revolution can only come as a universal revolution.

The repudiation of Utopia is here explicit. "Communism is not for us a state of things to be established, an ideal by which actuality is to be regulated. We call communism the real movement which does away with the existing state of things. The conditions for this movement are supplied by the existing conditions which are its presupposition."

"The true hearth and theatre of all history" is not the political world but civil society. The phrase *civil society*, we are here informed, originated in the eighteenth century. Civil society has the family with its developments and external relations as basis. It begins to have a regular development with the rise of the bourgeoisie which is, in the eighteenth century the potential, in the nineteenth the actual ruling class. Civil society is "the social organization which evolves directly out of production and commerce, and forms the basis of the state and all other idealistic superstructure." History, to be intelligible, must show the economic and social origin of events in its oecumenical validity. It must not, like that written in France and England, confine itself to political explanations, nor, like the really absurd history written by Bauer and his friends, give only the story of the ideas published by themselves, identifying, as it were, the history of the world with that of the book-fair at Leipzic. Feuerbach has a static conception of man. It is a social conception in that he insists on brotherhood. But, when he sees that his view of human nature is contradicted by the condition of the greater part of labouring mankind, he takes refuge in idealization, finding, even in the degraded, an essential human self. He therefore understands neither how men came to be in such a state nor how they can ever get out of it.

National history broadens into universal history. English manufactures have destroyed the livelihood of millions in Hindustan. Such facts as this, not any growth of ideas, account for the widening horizon. Nor do the ideas of an age follow from those of the age before it according to logic. They follow from its social conditions;

they are the ideas of its ruling class. This approach gives the industrial history of ideas and it is the only history of ideas; no other shows the connection of effect with cause. When the production of ideas ceases to be a function of the ruling class, or of a class dependent on it, the illusion that ideas are the self-producing movers of history will vanish. Thought is produced by beings who do other things besides thinking. It comes from their whole activity; it is rooted in what they see and handle and not in anything that comes from nowhere.

Marx is far from seeing in man a merely economic phenomenon. Such a creature would, in his view, have a merely animal existence. But man's human nature, with all its affections, thoughts and powers, is being progressively stolen from him by the historical development of institutions based on private property. It is not a sordid but an idealistic view which assumes that, given the material means of the good life, men will live it, and that liberty is the basis of a moral existence.

Under the heading *Commerce and the power of production*, comes a sketch of economic history from the beginning of the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. There is nothing here that is not now familiar to students of the subject, but the insistence on the importance of the division of labour between town and country and of the transition to a money economy with the widening of the market indicates what is significant for Marx and Engels. They give also an historical defence of mercantilism, which for them was not the result of undeveloped ideas but of compelling circumstances. When countries had to rely on the working up of native raw materials they had to protect the industries based on them. The

modern form of the state arises from the development of the bourgeoisie. By means of credit and the public debt they buy and enslave the state, which becomes "the mutual guarantee of their property and its interests." And so we arrive at the doctrine of the state given later in the Communist Manifesto. It is the instrument of the rule of a class over the rest of society.

The whole development results from the mode of production. "Among the ancient Romans the growth of private property remained without industrial and commercial consequences because their whole mode of production remained the same." Medieval and modern states, commencing with the great commercial port of Amalfi, adopted the principles of the developed Roman private law in proportion as private property resulted from their commercial and industrial development. "Law has no more its own history than has religion."

Finally the character of modern economy is brought out by comparing it with primitive economy in the last section of the chapter. Characteristics of primitive economy are the union of individuals through the tie of kinship or soil and their direct dependence on Nature. Men exchange with Nature their labour for her produce. Physical and mental activity are not separated and the dependence of the propertyless on the landowner rests on personal relations determined by the community. Industry is on a small scale, tools are primitive and there is no division of the process among different labourers.

Civilized man is not under the direct dominion of Nature but of the accumulated products of labour, the dominion of capital. The natural bonds have given place to the connection created by exchange, which is no longer

between man and Nature but between man and man. The average intelligence is no longer sufficient for the management of industry, so mental and physical labour become separated. The control of the possessor over the propertyless, being now exercised through money, has assumed an impersonal form, and the division of labour has become essential to industry.

The abolition of private property is possible only at a late stage of development. The writers are perfectly clear on "the necessity of private property for certain stages of industry. In extractive industry private property coincides with labour so long as the industry is on a small scale, and in all agriculture hitherto property is the necessary consequence of the available instruments of production. It is industry on a large scale that first brings about the contradiction between private property and the instrument of production, and for this industry must be very far developed. Only then can private property be abolished."

On the side of the proletariat the process is as follows. The division of the instruments of production among different capitalists creates a vast impersonal world of productive forces whose essence is to divide and rule the individuals "whose forces they are." They are "no longer the forces of individuals but of private property, and only of individuals in so far as these own private property." From the great majority the forces of production are alienated. But this great majority, having become abstract individuals merely, losing everything that distinguishes them, are, by that very fact, for the first time able to enter into union with each other. And the forces of production have themselves become a unity with a universal

character corresponding to that of commerce. The appropriation of these forces by the individuals has become a necessity, not merely for the sake of recovering initiative in relation to work but in order to be sure of existence itself. In order to appropriate the totality of productive instruments the individuals must develop in themselves a totality of capacities. All former appropriations of productive instruments by workers were partial and left them under the pressure of the division of labour. "In all former appropriations a mass of individuals were subsumed under a single instrument of production; the appropriation by the proletariat must effect the subsumption of a mass of instruments of production under each individual and of property under them all." Because of the universal character of this appropriation and of the proletariat itself, the revolution must likewise be universal and must develop in the proletariat the energy for achieving the appropriation. Only by this energizing experience can the human character of individuals be reintegrated. This is an essential dogma of Marxian psychology. The revolution is necessary not merely to abolish private property and to overthrow the capitalist class, but far more for the sake of developing the communistic consciousness of the workers themselves and effecting a very great change in their character, awakening their energies and capacities and fitting them to found a new social system.

This brings us to *Communism—Production of the form of intercourse itself*. Communism differs from all former movements in reversing both of the historical factors whose mutual relation is the index of historical change. These are the sum-total of the means and methods of

production on the one hand, and, on the other, the system of human intercourse, the organization of society, commerce—in short, bourgeois society. These factors are considered here in relation to the individual. To him they are either personal or accidental; personal and organic if depending on his essential nature and subordinate to his will, accidental if alien to his personality and imposed on him from without. This distinction is an historical one; particular institutions can be organic at one period and become accidental at a later period. In the eighteenth century, for example, the bourgeoisie had become a class. Its organization as an estate had, though formerly organic whilst social organization was local and corporative, now become alien to its nature and to its spontaneous activities as a class, that is, had become accidental in the sense of not being essential. But before the French Revolution the bourgeoisie continued politically a mere estate of the realm, though the forms of production, outrunning social and political organization, had made this third estate a class, a social layer whose nature and business involved freedom of competition and contract. Such contradictions between forces and forms are, when the old social forms have crystallized into authority, state, laws, and when new spontaneous activities of individuals have grown to a need and a power to break these fetters, causes of revolution. Not only in countries where the opposition in question is fully developed does it manifest itself in collisions. It may be called forth elsewhere by international trade and competition.

Former revolutions have liberated particular classes only. Their members have obtained freedom through association and in so far as they have been members of

their class, whose character as class is determined by its relations to another class. But there is another kind of association, false and illusory. Of this kind is the association forced by the bourgeoisie upon the working class. This class is certainly unified by the new industrial order, but its unity is "accidental," imposed from without, not of the essence of human individuals, not the creation of their free personalities. Its illusory character as association is shown by their helpless competition with each other. Such was not the association contemplated in the *Social Contract* of Rousseau.

But this proletariat has no interests as a class to assert, only as individuals. This is what was meant in the saying that the proletarian revolution is different from all earlier movements. It is the reversal of the relations of the human individual to the whole existing system of productive powers and social forms. At length the class arrives which is to destroy class. With the victory of the proletariat humanity—the individual—comes into his own, subjects to himself all the forces of production and the whole system of social intercourse.

With this ends the portion of the *German Ideology* devoted to Feuerbach. The object of it was to replace Feuerbach's man, the man whose mere multiplicity gave him the sense of species, by the active social man whose reality consists in social activities historically conditioned. The next chapter is entitled the *Council of Leipzic*. The lucubrations of Bauer and Stirner are jovially treated as an ecclesiastical debate. Their whole doctrine is for Marx and Engels theological, "mystical," at most pseudo-philosophical. Bruno Bauer is therefore canonized as Saint Bruno, and Caspar Schmidt, alias Max Stirner, becomes Saint Max.

"In the third volume of Wigand's *Quarterly* for 1845," runs the opening sentence, "Kaulbach's prophetic picture *The Battle of the Huns* comes true. The spirits of the slain, whose ferocity even Death has not quieted, make a hubbub and a howling upon the air, as of war and its outcries, a sound of swords and shields and iron chariots. But this is no earthly affair. The holy war is being fought not for the sake of protective tariffs and constitutions and potato disease, not for banks and railways, but in the sacred interests of the Spirit, for 'Substance,' for the 'self-consciousness, for criticism, the ego and the true human being.' We find ourselves in a council of the church." The agenda of this council is the denunciation and condemnation of the heretic Feuerbach. But we need not follow them into that part of the business since we are ourselves concerned with Marx and we know already what Marx thought of the critical critics. He repeats it here with a further elaboration of humour. He cannot get over the oddity of regarding criticism as the sole cause of events. He tries it on the book of Genesis, and proposes to say, "And Adam criticized his wife and she bare him a son."

But peace to all such. We pass to the attack upon Saint Max which takes up by far the greatest part of the book. Stirner's *Ego and his Own* was the latest twig on the Hegelian tree. Not content with having turned the tree topsy-turvy, Marx and Engels made a gorgeous bonfire of the twigs and danced about it. They had, however, a serious purpose. They were determined to give an account to themselves of every philosophical doctrine that stood in the way of an honest acceptance of the philosophical presuppositions of communism. Stirner's

was perhaps the only possible development of Hegelianism after Feuerbach and Bauer. Feuerbach had reduced Hegel's Absolute Spirit to man; Saint Bruno had reduced it further to the self-consciousness of man, making ideas the only active realities of life. Stirner, finding the heaven of the Absolute in the possession of Hegel and the two tabernacles of generic man and conceptual man already occupied, slipped naturally into the third tabernacle, that of egoistic man, of his, Stirner's, own core of self in its realization that all things else had, by his philosophical father and brethren, been thinned out into ghosts of which he need take no account. On this aspect of his derivation Marx and Engels have no doubt. If Stirner finds that the world of men has no claims on him it is because Bauer has already reduced them to negations of negations and symbols of abstractions. "Who does not detect Szeliga here?" ask Marx and Engels. "The man who as youth has got his head filled with all sorts of rubbish about existing powers and relations, such as emperor, fatherland, state, etc., and has known them only as fever-phantasms in the form of his imagination, actually destroys these powers, according to Saint Max, when and because he clears his head of them. And again, "Since Saint Max takes no account of the physical and social 'life' of the individual, says absolutely nothing about 'life,' he is quite consistent in rejecting by abstraction historical epochs, nationality, class, etc., or, what is the same thing, he distends the ruling consciousness of the class to which he stands nearest into the normal consciousness of 'a human life.' To lift himself above this local and schoolmasterly narrowness he has only to confront his 'young man' with the first merchant's clerk he meets, with any

young English factory hand, or with a young Yankee, to say nothing of a young Khirgis-Cossack." Stirner had divided life into three parts: childhood which is realistic; youth which is idealistic, and manhood which is "the negative unity of both" or egoistic; "the egoistic bourgeois" according to Marx and Engels, since Stirner necessarily reflects his class. Of old age Stirner will not speak since he has not experienced it.

Having in the first chapter dealt thus with the life of the individual, he projects his psychological scheme upon the larger scale of history. The "speculative idea" becomes "the driving force of history" and "history is accordingly reduced to the history of philosophy." Ideas, theories of life, having taken the place of life as the substance of history, the real history of human experience is used only "to supply bodies for these ghosts." The same categories are used as in the life of the individual, realism, idealism, egoism as negative unity of the two, or negatively as the unity of the two. The three periods correspond to the Negro, Mongolian and Caucasian races, with, however, a complicated detail of subdivisions. In the history of humanity the Caucasian period of manhood and egoism is yet to come and Stirner is its prophet. Two things more the student of Stirner has to keep in mind if he desires to watch the shiftings of this biographico-historical kaleidoscope. These are the Spook and the Bee-in-the-bonnet. The Spook is an essence regarded as having a real existence and so terrifying and controlling the person who believes in it. Spooks are God, man, the people, the family, or even the Devil. The Bee-in-the-bonnet is a fixed idea, moral notions that persist even after the Spook has been exorcised. The man who has

rejected theology may believe in moral obligations and so be still a slave, mad in certain respects.

In a section headed *The Ancients* Marx and Engels deal in detail with Stirner's interpretation of ancient history, showing how he has everywhere made events and national characters, great movements economic and political, depend on a succession of concepts in accordance with his arbitrary scheme. Of the Romans he can say little, since they had no philosophy, but he regards them and all their achievements as the outcome of Stoicism, taking, of all people, the poet Horace as its representative.

The life of the individual is for Stirner a progress in disillusion. The child is ruled at first by force but finds he can, after a time, defy his parents. The youth is ruled by ideals but comes to regard them as illusions. The man cares for nothing but himself except that he may love others for his own satisfaction. Translated into plain language, Stirner's doctrine is a simple and very common ethical solipsism. In the life of peoples the ancients generally are children, but with the complication that they have within their childhood all three stages, the childish, the youthful and the egoistic adult periods, and the same complication spoils the simplicity of the idealistic, youthful, medieval peoples. Christianity arrives at a time when the ancients, having "got at the back" of temporal power, had passed into the stage when they were ruled by ideas and had become strangers on the physical Earth, alien to the world and its possessions. Here, of course, Marx and Engels find the familiar Hegelian reversal of cause and effect. For them it was material conditions that produced the other-worldliness of the Christians. People found themselves strangers in

this world because under the Roman Empire wealth was gathered into thc possession of the very few. The impoverished majority evolved a set of beliefs corresponding to their actual circumstances and became Christians. In the course of his Procrustean task Stirner commits many palpable errors in history. It is clear that in going over the old ground of his Greek dissertation Marx enjoyed himself, and that he knew much more about Epicureans and Stoics and sceptics than did Stirner. " 'The ancients,' according to Saint Max, 'certainly had thoughts, but they knew not *thought*.' Add to this what we (Stirner) have said above about the thoughts we had as children. The history of ancient philosophy must arrange itself in agreement with Stirner's construction of it. In order that the Greeks may not go outside the part they had to play as children, Aristotle's life has to be cut out, with his *thought in and for itself* (ἡ νόησις ἡ καθ' αὑτήν), *the understanding that thinks itself* (Αὑτόν δὲ νοεῖ ὁ νοῦς), and the self-thinking thought (ἡ νόησις τῆς νοήσεως); and especially his metaphysics and the third book of his psychology must not exist."

The paragraphs on the moderns are similar to those on the ancients. Just as children and ancients succeed at last in "getting behind" the powers that rule them and finding nothing there, whereupon the truth of these things becomes untruth, so the moderns are "getting behind" the ideals that rule them and again a truth is becoming an untruth. The world of fact became nothing, then the world of ideas becomes nothing so that Stirner can arrive at his motto "all things are nothing to me, the 'unique one.' "

Marx and Engels follow him chapter by chapter

through his book. The task of ridicule is facilitated by the paradoxical style in which the book itself was written and its almost Shandean colloquiality. The argument of the critics consists largely in exposing Stirner's debt to Hegel and refuting what they regard as Hegelian inversions. "Thinking makes you a thinking being," says Stirner. "Hegelian!" they retort, "how can the thinking exist before the thinker, the child give birth to the mother?" But Hegel did at least know much on many subjects. He did, among the self-alienations of the Absolute, place many wide tracts of empirical science. He did not deny all reality to these modes of existence. Except in some few cases he only wanted turning the other way round. But Bauer and Stirner had lost sight of reality. Whichever way they turned they pointed only into the inane.

The satirical attack is dramatized by the introduction of Szeliga, the interpreter of *Mysteries of Paris*. Then Stirner himself, in his crusade against spooks and unrealities, becomes the Knight of the Rueful Countenance, with Szeliga as Sancho Panza, ultimately Saint Sancho. The satire is interspersed with passages in which Marx and Engels develope their own doctrine of history. In a chapter on *Political Liberalism* they trace the origins of the German liberalism of the 'forties. Its philosophic expression is found in Kant, in the *Critique of the Practical Reason*. Whilst the French bourgeoisie was making the greatest revolution in history, whilst the English were revolutionizing industry and preparing the economic subjugation of the world, the German middle class produced this philosophy of the good will, the pure intention, a perfect reflection of their impotence. Ever since the

Reformation German society had been developing a *petit-bourgeois* character. The smaller nobility was decimated by the Peasants' War. The "duodecimo principalities" and the landowners led a narrow life at which an English squire or French *gentilhomme* would have been disgusted. Many of them drifted into petty offices in the ridiculous administrations and the diminutive armies. The peasants obtained neither emancipation nor the possibility of consolidation into a revolutionary class. The urban manufacturers were beginning to adopt the earliest forms of modern machinery at a time when in England and France these forms were already superseded. Everything in Germany was fractional, the princelings, the independent cities, the universal division of interests. On such an economic and social basis no concentration of political power was thinkable. The estates had gone, the classes had not yet been formed. The period of absolute monarchy in Germany was the period of least unified administration, with public services disconnected and patriarchally managed. So insignificant were material interests in their dispersal that theory developed independently of life. Hence the purely formal and unpractical ethics of Kant. The discomforts of Napoleon's rule blinded the Germans to the folly of fighting to maintain petty legitimacies and petty bourgeois municipalities and bureaucracies. The revolution of 1830 presented them with modern liberal ideas before material conditions corresponded to such ideas, which were therefore adopted in a purely abstract form. By 1840 the German middle class had, however, a sufficiently developed economic life to enable them to understand their common interests. "They became national and liberal and wanted protec-

tive tariffs and constitutions. They have now therefore almost arrived where the French bourgeois were in 1789."

Stirner, as usual, reverses the actual process. Liberal theory has for him created the bourgeoisie. The constitutional state is the idol they have made to represent reason and their legalism is the result. The propertyless class have only to realize the spookiness of all this, to assert themselves as masterless egoists, and the state with all its unjust laws will be overthrown.

In 1789 Bailly said to Louis XVI, "You cannot dispose of my property without my consent." Stirner's comment is "the former subjects," through the calling of the States General, "attain the consciousness that they are owners of property." Marx and Engels answer "the former owners of property give effect to their consciousness that they are no longer subjects, a consciousness they had attained long before," of which writers in the eighteenth century and orators of 1789 bear witness. That is to say, according to Stirner the realization of the rational state gave birth as a general idea to the subordinate idea of property; according to his critics the existence of a rich middle class with economic supremacy gave rise in that class to a consciousness of political emancipation.

The prolctariat are for Stirner those who cannot live according to the mode of thinking of the liberal state. "He identifies proletariat with pauperism," say Marx and Engels. They point out that poverty is not the essence of the proletarian condition but its consequence. "Stirner and his friends may well count as paupers, never as proletarians." So far from the proletariat being oppressed

by a mere idea, which they have only to repudiate in order to be free, they have long ago been disillusioned, but far more than the repudiation of an idea must exist before the proletariat can be emancipated.

Stirner deals with communism under the name of social liberalism, "because he knows quite well into what evil odour the word 'liberalism' has come among the radicals of 1842 and among the most advanced free-thinkers in Berlin. This change of names gives him at the same time opportunity and courage to put all sorts of things into the mouths of the social liberals which, before Stirner, nobody ever said, and whose refutation will then at the same time count as a refutation of communism." Briefly Stirner's objection to socialism is that society is a new spook. The individual should refuse to sacrifice himself to it. The liberal state allowed money to rule. Under the rule of the communistic illusion labour takes its place, each having a claim upon the labour. So they get free of the capitalist only to become slaves of one another. By the transfer of property from the private owner to society, to an illusion, no real individual has anything and all become ragamuffins.

Marx and Engels maintain that Stirner has taken the sayings of certain communists for the real communist doctrine, has confused private property with property as such, and has committed a vast anachronism in attributing the sans-culottism of the French Revolution to modern communists when he says they wish to make the whole population ragamuffins. True communist doctrine is that expressed in the *Égalitaire* in 1840: "Social property is a contradiction, but social wealth is a consequence of communism. Fourier says a hundred times

. . . that the social evil does not consist in some having too much but in all having too little."

However abstract is the form in which the social problem is presented to them by their opponents, Marx and Engels never lose the sense of its tragic nature. Who is this mighty ego that is to claim its own from the rich or from society? "Is it the proletarian child, that comes into the world scrofulous, is nurtured with opium and sent at the age of seven into a factory; is it the individual workman who is supposed here to raise his fist against the world market, or the young girl who must starve or become a prostitute?"

Saint Max, who is now Saint Sancho with his little hoard of bourgeois maxims, accuses the communists of preaching the rights of the community. Marx has already, in the Franco-German Year-books, rejected the doctrine of rights both public and private except in the form of communism. He and Engels now reject equally the doctrine of "interests," as subordinating human beings to something outside themselves, "like Bentham's nose that must first have an 'interest' before it can decide on the act of smelling." Another wise saw of Saint Sancho is that a new society is impossible if it is to consist of the old individuals. But this is a greater difficulty for himself than for the communists. How are his powerful egoists to be engendered? The new communist society relies for its new individuals upon the creative, invigorating, inspiring and educative process of revolution.

Stirner commits the common fallacy of confusing personality and condition. Communism, he says, would destroy the prosperity of the class that lives by dividends, as if the quality of *rentier* were inalienable from certain

individuals, as if the right to be a capitalist overrode the claims of humanity to a better society for all. Stirner erects private property into an eternal truth instead of treating its different forms as what they are, "social bonds corresponding to a determinate stage in the development of the forces of production, and only individual in so far as they have not yet become a fetter upon the existing forces of production." The bourgeois is made to say to the communist, "Since you abolish property, that is my existence as capitalist, as landowner, as manufacturer, and your existence as worker, you destroy the individuality of us both; and since you make it impossible for me to exploit you workers, and to get my profits, interest or rent, you make it impossible for me to exist as an individual." Stirner supports his doctrine of property by etymology. The word "proper" means that which is a part of one's real being, and this both in German and the romance languages. He is reminded that this part of the language, and indeed most of the language that relates to economics, is the creation of the bourgeois class itself.

Stirner's historical constructions give many opportunities for stating in reply the materialist conception of history. He thinks Christianity does and always did prevent the wretched from complaining or rebelling, as if the Christian Middle Ages had not been full of revolts, and especially the early Middle Ages when the communes arose. He thinks it is modern liberalism that identifies mechanical labour with slavery, but what about the time of Spartacus? It is not the magic word of the liberals, "man," that has made communists and rebels of the workers, but machinery. Stirner is essentially bourgeois

in his outlook and thinks that the bourgeois revolution emancipated humanity. What Marx thought of this we already know.

Stirner goes on from the "social liberalism" of the communists to the "humane liberalism" of Bruno Bauer. Bauer says that in so far as he is a critical critic, self-consciousness, he is man. "Without that I am myself," answers Stirner. Marx and Engels tell him that it is not enough simply to reject the illusions of Feuerbach and Bauer by saying that "man," critical or not, has no claims on him. The question remains, "How came these illusions to be entertained?" We cannot answer this with a philosophy that boasts of having no presuppositions. We must presuppose the facts of experience. But Stirner cannot do this because, for all his criticism of Feuerbach and Bauer, he accepts their conclusions as far as they go and simply undertakes to go further. Stirner really believes that after Feuerbach the attributes of God are transferred to man, and that all the ego needs to do is to deny both them and man. He really believes that criticism has annihilated the world by turning it into concepts ready to be dismissed as mere spooks. And so this Don Quixote with his Mambrino-helmet fights doughtily the various funeral-processions which he takes for armies, and having, as he thinks, thrown off the law, is able to proceed to the second part of his book, his new testament, the gospel of the single, the unique self, himself. But this ego which has resulted from the negation of all the predicates of God and man, this negative unity of realism and idealism, this child without father or mother, is itself but an abstraction, a concept. And Stirner cannot account for the long submission to illu-

sions, cannot therefore know for certain that they were illusions. He does not know that every doctrine is the result of a social reality. Saint Sancho does not see that personal and general interests are only aspects of the personal development of human beings, and therefore in only apparent opposition to each other. But Sancho as dogmatist lets himself be imposed upon. He sees no other way to explain the imaginary opposition and the long rule of illusions than by assuming the birth of Sancho Panzas and Don Quixotes and by letting the Don Quixotes stuff their silly nonsense into the heads of the Sanchos. He pedantically adopts one side, declares it proper to the individual, and expresses his repugnance for the other.

Stirner, or rather Caspar Schmidt, was a Berlin schoolmaster, and Marx and Engels do not shrink from showing him how he came by his peculiar philosophy. "In the case of a localized Berlin schoolmaster or writer, whose activity is confined to professional drudgery on the one hand, on the other to the enjoyments of thinking, whose world extends from Moabit to Kopernik . . . whose relations with this world are reduced through a wretched position in life to a minimum, it is not to be avoided that . . . his thought will be as abstract as this individual himself, that, he being without ability to resist, it will become to him a fixed power, whose activity offers to the individual the possibility of a momentary rescue from his 'bad world,' a momentary enjoyment." Later the combination of bragging and sentimentality in his book are described as "the natural expression of the helpless ill-will of the philistine." And that ego, which he has created and worships, is conceived by him as abstracted from all

the conditions of life, though he has created it as the result of perfectly determinate conditions.

The theory of revolution receives a slightly more precise expression in these pages than in earlier writings of Marx. In the past the conditions of the individual life have always coincided with those of a class. "The practical task of each class as it emerged must have seemed a general task." It could only overthrow its predecessor "by liberating the individuals of all classes from some of their former bonds." This explains how the bourgeois in the French Revolution could feel their cause as the cause of humanity. It also explains why Marx admitted the bourgeois revolution as having its place in human progress. It freed even the proletariat from some forms of subjection. The revolutionary task of the proletariat is imposed by its needs. The proletarian, reduced to the condition of a mere commodity and driven out of the market by other commodities, machines, finds his human existence impossible.

That Stirner can point everywhere to "sacred" things that are really shams is itself the result of the social conditions of the times, the shams, for instance, of the liberal democratic state with so great a lack of freedom for its members. "The more the normal forms of social intercourse or commerce, and therewith the conditions of the ruling class, develope their opposition to the now further advanced powers of production, the greater therefore the cleavage in and against the ruling class, the more untrue becomes the consciousness that originally corresponded to this social form."

The driving force is always the conflict between existing powers of production and the social forms created by

former powers of production. Neither the will of the individual nor the law of the state can be more than the products and instruments of this movement. But when the powers of production have increased so much as to make competition unnecessary, then all is changed. The true philosophy will no longer be that of Hobbes but of Rousseau. The general will comes at length into existence with the disappearance of class and is enthroned in the place of economic forces, but only by its control of them.

As to the antecedents and causes of this revolution, Marx and Engels tell us that it can never arise from the country but only from the town. The system of small private properties in land, not due, as Stirner supposed, to liberal ideas but to undeveloped means of production, was a necessary stage. Without it the need for communistic organization could not make itself felt. But the smallholders who are ruined by the progress of competitive agriculture through the concentration of capital are too weak and scattered to combine for revolution. They have to await a wider movement which does not depend on them.

Nor can the place of the proletarian revolution be supplied by socialistic experiments in single industries. For instance, Stirner recommends public bakeries. He is answered that plenty of public bakeries existed in the time of the gilds. But these local and limited institutions had perforce to give way before the cheaper system of universal competition. Saint Sancho is ignorant of the way in which the economic system has been changed by competition, which has abolished local limitations, established communications, a highly developed division of labour, world commerce, proletariat and machinery. In

vain he "casts a melancholy backward glance at the philistinism of the Middle Ages." The proletariat, which in its modern form is the child of competition, has attempted many communal institutions, but they have all succumbed to the superior methods of private trade. But this vast increase in the powers of production is, as we have seen more than once in these pages, the necessary condition of a proletarian revolution and the abolition of competition.

It is not only politics that for Marx and Engels are conditioned and even created by the social and economic relationships, but also the fine arts, which to Stirner are a fortress of individualism; however much he will modify his anarchism in the matter of bread-shops he sees in a great poem or picture the absolute freedom of a single mind. But no, says his two critics, Da Vinci's works could have been produced by nobody but a Florentine, Raphael's only in the Roman school and Titian's nowhere but in Venice. Few of Raphael's frescoes were executed entirely by his own hand; Mozart's *Requiem* contains more than one man's work. That painting has come to be the sole occupation of specialized persons is a result of the division of labour. In a communistic society there will be no painters; there will be men who, among other occupations, also paint.

Though he will not see the social basis of the fine arts, or allow any organization there, Stirner does modify his individualism increasingly in proportion to his attempts to envisage its actual working. This leads to one of the arguments on which Marx and Engels most insist. Stirner allows society, but he cannot cut off from social evolution its natural result, the state. In allowing division of labour,

exchange, property in land and the rest, he posits all that in history has constituted civil society and that requires the state as its counterpart and outcome. He allows union, and his union, much as he protests, takes on functions of government. He admits restrictions on liberty, trying to distinguish liberty from the "ownness" of the individual which he tries to preserve. But it is in vain. What is, after all, the difference between liberty and this "ownness"? Marx and Engels deny that there is any difference. The division of labour will affect this "ownness" with specific occupational disadvantages. If he is a throstle-spinner it will be stiff knees; if he is a farm labourer it may be exclusion from town life and from culture.

There are other consequences of his principle which Stirner cannot escape. He cannot prevent his society from being one of mutual egoistic exploitation. His theory is then traced from its rise with Hobbes and Locke, side by side with the rise of bourgeois society. The French bourgeoisie found its voice in the similar doctrines of Helvétius and Holbach. The category of utility was derived by abstraction from the conditions of civil society at a certain epoch, and then in turn these conditions were declared to be the realization of the category which had been abstracted from them. The utilitarians had their merit in their time. The old feudal society had lived just as much by exploitation as its successors, but had concealed it under a patriarchal and religious exterior. The utilitarians gave the true character to existing relations of which money was now the adjusting medium and political economy the appropriate science. Hobbes and Locke "had both lived for a time in Holland; they had

both seen the early struggles of the English bourgeoisie . . . and had before their eyes a relatively developed stage of manufacture, oversea commerce and colonization." Locke saw joint-stock companies, the Bank of England, the beginnings of the English maritime supremacy. Helvétius and Holbach had studied the English theory and seen the development of England; they had seen in France the commercial spirit taking on the form of financial speculation. These circumstances, the financial difficulties of the French government, the cosmopolitan society of Paris and "the more universal character of the French in general" gave a more general colour to the theory under their hands, though it retained its predominantly economic significance. But in England it was the recognition of a fact, in France a philosophical system. Abstract as the French theory was, the life of the age gave it concreteness, a rich content, a fulness of business and practical meaning. This was partly the work of the physiocrats. Their doctrine reflected certainly the predominance of landed property in France in the eighteenth century, but they were the first who made economics a separate science. They did not complete the utilitarian system. Though they showed everything in its economic relations, they left to the various departments of life other aspects which fell outside the scope of utilitarian calculation. Bentham was the first to make utilitarianism the sole and universal basis of all human conduct. This theory was limited to the conditions of the existing bourgeois world and so was a theory of the common good. "In the division of labour the private activities of the individual became a common utility, and Bentham's common utility was something that was realized through

competition." It became an apologetic for the existing, the bourgeois world. "It has this character in all the modern economists."

In the chapter on *My Self-Enjoyment* Marx and Engels observe that theoretic hedonism arose in ancient Greece in a leisured class and was revived when feudalism decayed and a pleasure-loving court nobility took its place. The bourgeoisie generalized the theory and treated it as if it applied to every individual. The hypocrisy of such a generalization could only become apparent when the conditions of production and distribution, with consequent distinction between bourgeois and proletariat, had been laid bare and the communistic outlook had come into being. "By this, all morality, whether ascetic or hedonistic, lost its force."

The doctrine of class struggles attains here already the precision that marks its statement in the Communist Manifesto. "Men always have freed themselves to the extent which, not their ideal of humanity, but the existing forces of production prescribed and permitted. All liberations hitherto have been based on limited forces of production, whose products, insufficient for the whole of society, made development possible only by some satisfying their needs at the expense of others, and consequently the former, the minority, obtained the monopoly of the development, whilst the others, the majority, through the continual struggle for the satisfaction of the most urgent needs, for the time being (that is till the creation of the new revolutionary forces of production) were shut out from all development. So society hitherto has always developed within an opposition which among the ancients was that of freemen and slaves, in the middle

ages of nobles and serfs, in modern times of bourgeoisie and proletariat. This is the explanation of the abnormal 'inhuman' way in which the ruled class satisfies its needs, and on the other hand of the limitations within which commerce and with it the whole ruling class has developed . . . producing inhuman conditions in the ruling class too."

The writers of this paragraph on class have also their theory of the individual. They repeat here the statement that the division of labour and private property can only be abolished by an all-round development of the individual. Communism gives the only society in which the free and spontaneous development of the individual is more than a mere phrase. The universal activities of the individual depend on a development of the powers of production which enables him to control them, on solidarity, and on the educative process of revolution. The principle of the new society will not be love and devotion; on the other hand, it will not be egoism.

Thus closes the significant portion of the *Leipzic Council*, but the *Leipzic Council* is not the whole of the *German Ideology*. The critical critics and Stirner were not the only writers who were leading people away from a true social philosophy. Marx and Engels had not yet finished with their friends the "True Socialists." These were a group of thinkers who deduced their socialism from German idealistic philosophy without regard to the dependence of the future on the actual social development of the past. Their organ was the Rhenish Year-books. Hess had much affinity with them but was too near to Marx not to be drawn at times out of his own philosophical orbit. Karl Grün was one of the most prominent "True Socialists" and Marx thought it important to

counteract his influence. A third was Hermann Pütman, the editor of the Rhenish Year-books.

From these closing chapters of the *German Ideology* we learn little or nothing more of the theories of Marx and Engels, except their respect for certain French socialistic writers. Karl Grün's rather superficial Hegelianism requires for its refutation nothing that has not already been said in substance in earlier parts of the work. It is interesting, however, to know that our authors thought Fourier's discussion of education "far the best of its kind in existence and full of observations of genius"[6] and to note their admiration for "the colossal observation of mankind that Fourier brings to bear on the modest mediocrity of the society of the Restoration period." They also considered that the most fruitful period of the St. Simonian school was between the death of its master in 1825 and the revolution of 1830, and that the criticism of existing society in the *Globe* in 1831 was very thorough and very important. If it is true, as has been surmised,[7] that Moses Hess drafted originally the last essay in the *German Ideology*, that directed against Dr. George Kühlmann, it is interesting that Hess should have collaborated in a work directed in part against forms of social thought akin to his own, though in his "Philosophy of Action" he had little in common with the quietism of the Bauers.

The negotiations for publishing the *German Ideology* in Germany broke down. It was not a very safe speculation for a publisher. Many years afterwards Engels had another look at the manuscript and then restored it to its seclusion. But it is by no means a work of minor importance. Taking its four main divisions together, it is a consolidation of the basis on which Marxism arose. The

objects of criticism were as well chosen as if the original plan had been a symmetrical prolegomena to a new philosophy, with an interpretation of history and a new economic and political science. The total achievement is astonishing. The first part, dealing with Feuerbach, corrected a vague idealization of humanity by establishing the social character and conditioning of the individual and his activities and gave organic life to the abstractions inherited from the eighteenth century and by the eighteenth from the sixteenth. The second part, dealing with Bruno Bauer and through him with Hegel, furnished the first powerful naturalistic criticism of the apparently triumphant, conclusive and all-embracing idealistic philosophy of the age. Stirner's ethical and historical effusions gave the opportunity, in the third part of the book, to ground an historical theory on a principle of development, the dynamic relations of productive force and social structure, which seemed, though in a less exact science, to challenge comparison with Newton's unification of astronomy. Finally, in criticism of the "True Socialists," the authors boldly outline the practical corollary of all this socio-economic philosophy. All these formed parts of one remarkably consistent, comprehensive and articulated universe of mind. If we ask to which of the two collaborators the book owes its greatness, the answer seems to be that although Engels had much knowledge of the industrial system and its machinery of exploitation, and was in various fields a brilliant scholar, the system outlined in the *German Ideology* is most intelligible in the light of the previous writings of Marx. In view of the self-effacing generosity of Engels it is fairer to judge Marx's claim on these grounds than from statements of

Engels. But we should not forget, either, that Engels has told us how, when he met Marx in Brussels in the spring of 1845, Marx unfolded to him the completed materialist theory of history, nor that Engels confessed to having received from his friend in the writing of the *German Ideology* a lesson in thoroughness of investigation. Marx it was who taught him "how one ought to work."[8] Finally we remember that even as a junior member of the doctor-club in Berlin Marx had attracted attention by the fertility with which he supplied ideas for all the discussions.

CHAPTER XI

PROUDHON

THE practical work of Marx as a socialist began in Brussels in 1846, in the summer of the completion of the *German Ideology*. In close co-operation with Engels, who was staying in Paris, he formed corresponding societies to link and guide propaganda in England, France and Germany. There was also an abortive plan for a communistic publishing company. Early in 1847 he joined the League of the Just, a communistic society of German workers whose chief centres were London and Paris. The league was reorganized later in the year as the Communist League, with the motto "Proletarians of all lands, unite!" It was the first Marxist society.

The socialist movement, which had become important in England and France in the 'thirties, and was extending to Germany, had taken various forms in different countries. In England its most characteristic expression had been found in Owenite co-operation, and much socialism was latent under the provisionally political movement of Chartism. Engels wrote both for the *New Moral World* and for the *Northern Star*, and his German study of English industrial conditions is a work of great historical value. In France, where trades-unionism was still illegal, the methods of the revolutionary secret society were adopted in the socialist movement, but a more definite and doctrinaire socialism had been promulgated by the Saint Simonians, whilst *La Démocratie Pacifique*, under the leadership of Considerant, endeavoured to spread the

doctrines of Fourier. In Germany it seemed as if the "True Socialists" and the more violent opportunism of Weitling might have the field to themselves, a field restricted and endangered by the censorships and police of the various governments. Marx devoted himself to the task of clearing the ground. As he said in a conference with Weitling, to encourage the working classes to rebel in expectation of the immediate establishment of a just and happy society was a criminal undertaking, since it could only lead to disaster. Socialism was for Marx dependent upon certain historical developments not yet fully realized, on a high development of the forces of production, on the reduction of the class struggle to that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and on the existence of the democratic state under bourgeois predominance. It was a task of socialists, where these conditions were not realized, to help to bring them about. This was most especially the case in Germany, but even in France and England it was necessary to facilitate the development of liberal institutions. No good could come of communistic co-operation with the party of reaction against the liberal reforms, whether from sentimental illusions about medieval socialism or from dissatisfaction with the unsocialistic nature of the reforms. In pursuance of this task Marx formed his groups for correspondence; for this he endeavoured to clear the ground of mistaken and futile forms of socialism, broke with Weitling, and with Engels induced the Communist League to denounce and disown the sentimental utopianism of Hermann Kriege, a "True Socialist" who had commenced activity in New York; for this, too, they warned Proudhon against Karl Grün.

The next important book of Marx was directed against Proudhon himself. In Proudhon he was attacking one of the greatest representatives of a tendency destined, even after both of them were dead, to divide the socialistic world with Marxism. Proudhon had been inspired, in the course of a youth of heroic struggles, by the twin impulses of intellectual ambition and philanthropic passion. Like some other self-taught thinkers he had embraced a great range of learning and had attempted the foundation of vast systems of thought. As a system builder he was not successful; his importance lies in two other directions. He is one of that protesting group that includes Tolstoy, Carlyle and Ruskin, who, however they differed, agreed in attributing most of the evils of modern times to the escape of the social sciences from the control of ethics. What Machiavelli did for politics and Adam Smith for political economy was by no means the triumph of progress which to most modern minds it appears. Proudhon was not even satisfied with writers who, like Rossi, wished the results of economic science, where they conflicted with humanity, to be overruled by superior considerations of ethics. He insisted that the postulates of ethics must be satisfied within economic science itself. This is one of the sources of Proudhon's importance. The other is that he stands at the head of those who have endeavoured to think out a form of socialism based on co-operation, to create, on a foundation of social effort, a new and juster society which should be based on the voluntary relations of individuals repudiating the state. He is thus the father of modern anarchism and syndicalism.

The nature of the divergence between Marx and Proudhon will be most easily seen by remembering that

Marx had passed through the school of Hegel. By Hegel, who saw in all Nature and all history nothing but the self-expression of supreme reason, no ultimate conflict between the world of ethics and the historical process was admitted. World history was to Hegel explicitly the highest ethical instance. *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*. This attitude, for all his famous reversal of the Hegelian system, affected the approach of Marx to social theory. His conception of the human individual was profoundly ethical, and was the focus of his social passion. But that reintegration of human personality which was for him the desired end was conditioned in his view by the whole social evolution of classes and productive organization.

Marx had studied *What is Property?* during his first period of socialistic reading. He had found in it a valuable first criticism of those foundations of their science which the economists had uncritically assumed, but he had remarked that its author did not propose to abolish private property in more than name. In founding his Corresponding Societies, Marx invited Proudhon's co-operation. Proudhon, in reply, adopted an air of somewhat sceptical detachment, avowed himself opposed to revolution, and announced that his own work for the present was purely critical, without dogmatism or sense of finality. When Marx soon afterwards read the *Contradictions Économiques*, it proved to be just the sort of book with which he had no patience, full of misunderstood Hegelian dialectic hastily collected, inaccurate economic matter, and all put together with a pretentious, turgid style of writing.

The subtitle of the work, *The Philosophy of Poverty*,

gave him the title for his reply, *The Poverty of Philosophy*. In a short preface he said that Proudhon had been doubly misunderstood. In France they forgave him his bad economics on the strength of his German philosophy. In Germany they thought he was one of the best French economists and therefore overlooked the weakness of his philosophy. Marx undertook to correct the error both ways. Years later, recalling the severity of his criticism, Marx claimed that it had been fully justified. His own scrupulous and laborious methods of study were in the sharpest contrast with what he found here.

Proudhon's book was prefaced with a pretentious piece of literary philosophizing, not altogether without some appeal to those who recognize in it the intellectual warmth of self-taught genius and a feeling for the glamour of history, but in its main argument a curious feat of otiose thinking. The idea of God is adopted as a kind of vanishing limit, necessary as a hypothesis for the discovery of truth in all directions, but itself in the end turning out to be nothing at all. As a climax "I have need of God to justify my style," writes Proudhon. "The style," comments Marx, "is what the French call *ampoulé*."

The first of the "economic contradictions" is between value in use and value in exchange. Proudhon gave an account of the origin of exchange which presupposed persons having already different functions. Marx finds this explanation both unhistorical and impossible. He distinguishes three periods in the history of exchange. In the first people exchanged only what they had produced over and above their own requirements. In the more developed division of labour of the second period every-

thing was produced for commerce; this is the period Proudhon had taken as the first. All industrial products passed through the market before being consumed. The third period is that of general corruption, when not only industrial commodities but everything has become venal: virtue, love, opinion, science, conscience.

But the main attack of Marx was directed against Proudhon's doctrine of "constituted value." Value in use and value in exchange are in mutual opposition, since the more of any kind of useful goods exists the lower will be the price. Proudhon sees here thesis and antithesis. The synthesis he seeks to establish is what in the middle ages was known as the just price, and Proudhon calls it "constituted value." Adopting Ricardo's theory that labour determines price, he thinks all things should be exchanged in the proportion of the amounts of labour they represent. This, he argues, would correct the unfairness that arises from the oscillations of demand and supply and would satisfy his fundamental requirement of equality. Marx answers that Ricardo's theory is a statement of actual, not of ideal conditions. Equal labour values do exchange one against the other, but this does not produce a society of equals. The reason is that labour is among the commodities exchanged and paid for at the cost of cheapest production. Proudhon opposes the free producer to the free consumer and makes the opposition between supply and demand a matter of the human will. Marx answers that neither is free, that the producer is forced to produce and the buyer to buy. The scale of production depends on the existing degree of development of the forces of production. The amount a consumer must purchase depends on his needs and his means. Both are determined

by his social position, and this depends on the totality of the social organization.

A contributory error to Proudhon's theory is his supposition that if, as Marx also thinks, labour is the measure of value, then a day's labour of one man will pay for a day's labour of another. But the day's labour of one man, a jeweller for instance, may represent, in its product, many days' contributory labour of other men, may be "complex." Whose product is worth most is shown by competition. Certainly when all labour is analysed into its constituent labour an hour will be found to have paid for an hour. But this does not depend, as Proudhon would have it, on man's will. Man is the slave of competition. The result is "not the work of M. Proudhon's eternal justice; it is simply the work of modern industry."

Proudhon confuses the value of labour with the quantity of labour embodied in a commodity. The quantity of labour embodied in a commodity is the cost of its production and determines its value in exchange. The value of labour is the price which a given quantity of such labour can command, its wages. This, too, is settled by competition, which pushes it towards the minimum, the cost of its production. But this, on account of the difference between the values of "complex" and simple labour-time, and on account of the difference in productivity of the same labour in different circumstances, is not the same thing as the amount of labour embodied in the product. A good harvest may increase the productivity of a day's labour, whose product then exchanges for more labour than formerly. A machine may similarly affect the value of labour in manufacture. The selling

price of an article in each case remains proportionate to the amount of labour embodied in it, to what it cost to produce. And a labourer likewise will only be able to get in wages what he cost to produce, the amount of labour embodied in his means of subsistence.

It is Proudhon's want of clearness on competition that occasions his illusory hope of fixing a just price on the basis of labour-time. He sees the opposition between supply and demand, not the competitive opposition between supply and supply, demand and demand. Nor does he see the dependence on competition of the scale of production attained in modern industry. For Marx, as we know already, only by abolishing the system of private property can the necessity of competition be overcome; and the high rate of production secured by competition is necessary for the revolution that is to get rid of private property. Marx does not claim originality in discovering the distinction between the value of labour and the quantity of labour embodied in a commodity. He reminds Proudhon that it had been revealed long ago by Ricardo in correction of Adam Smith.

Proudhon attempts further to vindicate eternal justice in an historical account of the relation between utility and value in exchange. The articles most needed by man require least labour and were produced first. Afterwards men had leisure to produce things requiring more labour and satisfying needs of a higher order. Marx sees here a complete ignoring of the struggle between classes to which civilization from the very beginning owes its progress. "It is as if we were to say that because under the Roman Emperors oysters were fed in fish-ponds, enough food existed for the whole population of Rome; whilst,

so far from this being the truth, the Roman people had not the wherewithal to buy bread, when the Roman aristocrats had plenty of slaves with which to feed their oysters. The price of food has almost always been rising, and that of manufactured articles and objects of luxury as continually falling." In modern society the greatest production is certainly not of things most needed, even in the case of production for the poor. "Cotton, potatoes and brandy are the objects most commonly used. Potatoes have engendered scrofula; cotton has largely driven out linen and wool, though linen and wool are, in many cases, far more useful if only from a hygienic point of view; finally brandy has ousted beer and wine, though brandy, used as an alimentary substance, is generally recognized as a poison. During a whole century governments have been vainly struggling against European opium; economics prevailed and dictated orders to consumption." The cause is that "in a society founded on wretchedness the most wretched objects have the fatal privilege of serving for the use of the greatest number."

In both his theory of labour-time and his theory that useful things are the cheapest, Proudhon is implicitly justifying existing conditions. And under existing conditions, Marx insists, poverty and progress spring from the same roots. "Industry on a large scale, forced by its own instruments to produce on an ever larger scale, cannot wait upon demand. Production precedes consumption and supply forces demand. In existing society, in industry based on individual acts of exchange, the anarchy of production, which is the source of so much misery, is at the same time the source of all progress." The only way to have the progress without the anarchy

is to abandon the system of individualism in exchange. Those who, like Proudhon, wish to get rid of the anarchy of production without abolishing individualism in exchange must go back to past conditions, must abandon progress.

Marx had a great advantage over Proudhon in his much wider knowledge of the literature of economics, especially in English. He is able to write "whoever is at all familiar with the movement of political economy in England knows that almost all the socialists of that country have at one time or another proposed the egalitarian application of the theory of Ricardo." After mentioning works by Edmunds and Thompson, he gives a list of extracts from Bray. One of these extracts contains a sentence pointing directly towards the theory of surplus value: "the workmen have given the capitalist the labour of a whole year, in exchange for the value of only half a year." But Bray and Proudhon were intent on their system of just exchange, Marx on exposing its reactionary character; so the theory of surplus value had to wait. Bray, however, and Marx who copied out the sentence, did see that "it is from this cause, and not from a supposed inequality of the physical and intellectual powers of individuals that the inequality of wealth and power has arisen." Bray drew the conclusion that no change in the form of government is sufficient in the absence of equality of exchanges and of work. Bray's practical solution was the same as Owen's, a system of exchanges according to labour value. This form of co-operation was to be attempted by Proudhon himself in 1849, in spite of a warning footnote of Marx: "They founded in London, Sheffield, Leeds and in many other towns in England *equitable labour-exchange-bazaars*.

These bazaars, after having absorbed considerable capitals, have all scandalously gone bankrupt. They have lost the taste for them once for all: *avis à M. Proudhon!*"

Proudhon returns to "constituted value," which is his great discovery, he thinks. He believes he has found an example of it in money. Since money can always be exchanged, the synthesis between supply and demand seems to have been reached. And if the value of gold and silver can be "constituted" why not the value of other things? Marx points out, quoting Ricardo to support his contention, that money as money is not a commodity, and its value is not fixed by the quantity of labour required for its production. The equivocal character of a coin, its double value as money and as metal, has tempted Proudhon to attribute the qualities of the coin to the metal, and then to extend them, as a possibility of being "constituted" to all other commodities.

Proudhon maintains that if the value of all things could be "constituted," which would mean fixing for everything a just price, the wealth due to the superiority of associated over isolated labour would no longer be appropriated by the capitalist, but would be justly apportioned. Society conceived as a single being, whom he names Prometheus, has owing to association and to progress in technique a continually increasing excess of products over his needs. Marx considers this personification of the collectivity a sophistical device covering a multitude of errors. It obliterates all the decisive factors: division of labour, struggle of classes and competition. Proudhon certainly reintroduces the separate individuals of industrial society when he comes to distribution. But Marx insists that if the historical conditions of production are annihilated

there will be but little to distribute. This suppression by Proudhon of the consideration of the productive system is the root of the differences between him and Marx. As M. Armand Cuvillier says,[9] "Proudhon believes one could suppress unearned income and surplus value without changing the organization of production."

In the second chapter of the *Poverty of Philosophy* Marx examines Proudhon's method, especially as regards its derivation from Hegel. Proudhon regarded Hegel's *thesis and antithesis* as a generalization or proliferation of Kant's antinomies of the pure reason. Hegel's merit was, he thinks, to have seen that the principle of antinomy was far more general than Kant supposed.

Applying dialectic to economics Proudhon, we saw, commenced with value and found the first contradiction to be that between value in use and value in exchange. This he proposes ultimately to reconcile in "constituted value." But in order to arrive at this he has to pass through several contradictions. The first are those involved in the division of labour. "Considered in its essence," he writes, "the division of labour is the mode in which the equality of conditions and intelligences is realized. It is this which, by the diversity of functions, gives place to the proportionality of the products and to equilibrium in the exchanges." But unfortunately he finds that the division of labour brutalizes the labourer. So we get "antagonistic effects of the principle of division." These are wealth and degradation. The synthesis is provided by machines. These too have their "antagonistic effects," which have to be harmonized by competition. The remaining terms of the series are competition, monopoly, taxation, the myth of Providence or responsi-

bility to God, the balance of commerce—wherein arises the antagonism between free trade and protection—credit, property, community—which is a kind of socialism, which has within it a whole crop of contradictions and is finally dismissed as a religion of poverty—and, lastly, the balance of population. Proudhon calls all ten of them epochs, but insists that they are all contemporaneous. They are logical, not historical epochs.

Here Marx objects that if they are really not epochs they must be abstractions. The logical formula again, as with Hegel, becomes the method of science. Proudhon has substituted for the historical movement a movement of the pure reason. For Proudhon "believes himself to be constructing the world by the movement of thought, whilst he is only reconstructing systematically and arranging according to absolute method the thoughts that are in everyone's mind." Proudhon, in his own copy of Marx, replied here with a marginal note: "I don't pretend to do anything else; and I think this is something."

Marx has the same criticism for this procedure as for all Hegelianism: "M. Proudhon, as a true philosopher taking things the wrong way round, sees in real relations only incarnations of these principles, these categories. . . . What he has not understood is that these determinate social relations are just as much produced by men as are cloth, flax, etc." Proudhon here accuses Marx of misrepresenting him. "This is precisely what I do say. Society produces the laws and the materials of its experience." When Marx accuses "these ideas, these categories" of being "historical and transitory products" Proudhon replies that they are "eternal as humanity, neither more nor less; and all contemporary."

To Marx it seemed that Proudhon simply divided each category into its good and bad sides, and sought the synthesis by finding something to eliminate the bad side. Proudhon called this an "impudent calumny." But it is difficult, after seeing how each of the epochs corrects the one before it, to avoid Marx's opinion of them. And Proudhon himself says "the industrial movement, following in everything the deduction of ideas, divides into a double current the one with useful, the other with subversive effects." Proudhon protested, further, against the word "eliminated," as he was bound to do if he could say that his categories were eternal. But on that supposition it is difficult to see how the bad sides were to be neutralized, and what was the object of his series if they were not neutralized.

Proudhon, in truth, wrote a valuable study of industrialism, but his dialectic did not help him. It simply, as Marx said, "dislocates the members of the social system." If there is any final synthesis by which, to use Proudhon's own words, "human reason, the social genius repasses at a leap all the anterior positions and, in a single formula, resolves all its problems" it must be according to Proudhon's argument "constituted value." This, the egalitarian application of the Ricardian labour theory of value, is, Marx insists, the essence of Proudhon's teaching. Marx rejects it for reasons already given.

Marx's criticism is seldom purely negative. He is not content with detecting inconsistencies, false assumptions and vagueness. He is always ready with what he believes to be the truth of the matter. Here he supplies an example of his own dialectic of history, beginning with an attack on the economists on the ground of their unhistorical

thought. They regard the conditions correctly analysed by Ricardo as normal, bourgeois institutions as natural, the relations obtaining under a system of private property and competition as eternal laws. Other systems, that have had their day, were exceptional. Such was, for instance, feudalism. But Marx insists on an historical explanation that embraces all the stages and their transitions. Of feudalism he says, with a side hit at Proudhon, that it had its good and bad sides. It is the bad side, in this case the serfs, that is important, that produces the class struggle and constitutes the movement of history. So far from being eliminated it must triumph, or progress is prevented, the bourgeoisie never comes into existence. Eliminate the bad side? "One would have set oneself the absurd problem of eliminating history." Within feudalism Marx includes the whole urban system of gilds and corporations as well as rural feudalism. The bourgeoisie is the result of the struggle of classes within feudalism and inherits the productive powers developed during the feudal period and during the struggle. The mode of production and the relations in which productive forces develope are anything but eternal laws. They correspond to determinate stages of development in men and in productive powers, and they lead to further changes. "As it is above all necessary to avoid being deprived of the fruits of civilization, the forces of production already acquired, it is necessary to break the traditional forms in which they have been produced."

"The bourgeoisie commences with a proletariat which, itself, is a remainder of the proletariat of feudal times." But as the antagonism within bourgeois society developes, a new, a modern proletariat is evolved, as well as a

struggle between this proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The antagonism developes through the double effects of the new system of production, riches being produced on the one hand, poverty on the other, and the rich class is continually recruiting the proletariat with its failures. At this stage arise different schools of economists. Adam Smith and Ricardo, the classic school, represent the bourgeoisie striving to be rid of the vestiges of feudalism, and demonstrating the laws by which industry and commerce, the creation of bourgeois wealth, progress if untrammelled. The sufferings of the proletariat are regarded at this stage, even by the victims, as transitory, as the birth-pangs of a new prosperity. But "in our own period" the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are in direct opposition. The economists now, Marx calls them the romantics, express a blasé indifference to the fate of the proletariat. But a third school has appeared, the humanitarian, taking that distress to heart, but with no better advice to offer than sobriety, good work and few children. For them the good and bad sides correspond to the disaccord of theory and practice. The philanthropic school is the humanitarian school perfected. It denies the necessity for antagonism and aims at turning the proletarians into bourgeois. The struggle, however, developes, and, in proportion as the proletariat becomes conscious of it and organizes for it, it becomes a political struggle. The proletariat produces its own theorists, the socialists and communists. At first the productive forces within the bourgeois system are not sufficiently developed for the conditions necessary for the proletariat's liberation to be clearly seen, and poverty is regarded merely as poverty. At this stage the theorists are utopian, devising ideal

societies. As productive powers develop and the conditions of the struggle become clear, whilst the revolutionary aspect of poverty comes into sight, theory ceases to be utopian and becomes revolutionary. Proudhon's comment is a charge of plagiarism. "But all this is mine! I have said all this. Plagiary of my first chapter." Proudhon must have read and annotated somewhat hastily. As he was only writing to himself we can scarcely accuse him of insincerity. If there was any plagiarism it was one for which Marx had full authorization from Engels, who wrote: "So far as I am concerned you can anticipate as much as you like of our publication," that is, of the *German Ideology*. Proudhon in his first chapter had made objections to the political economists and used the word "utopian" of the socialists. But the resemblance to Marx's historical account is superficial.

Proudhon's treatment of his second and third epochs, division of labour and machines, makes it difficult to understand his objection to Marx's statement that in each category Proudhon sees a good and a bad side and seeks a solution in the elimination of the latter. Proudhon writes: "Considered in its essence the division of labour is the mode in which the equality of conditions and intelligences is realized." But "the division of labour has become for us the instrument of impoverishment." The problem is to find "the recomposition which effaces the inconveniences of division, whilst preserving the useful effects." This treatment of the division of labour as a timeless "essence" is thoroughly alien from Marx's way of thinking. He writes, "We have then to find in the abstraction, the idea, the word, a sufficient explanation of the division of labour in the different epochs of history. Castes, corpora-

tions, the manufacturing régime, large-scale industry have to be explained by the single word 'divide' "! And he goes on to show how different have been the various periods in respect of the division of labour according to the nature of the forces of production and the extent of the market.

To obviate the disastrous consequences of the division of labour, which confines the workman to the repetition of a single operation and stultifies his mind, Proudhon introduces machines, as "the logical antithesis of the division of labour." But whatever the economic advantages of machinery, it does not, on Proudhon's own showing, and as Marx observes, counteract the evils produced by the division of labour but rather intensifies them. Again Marx insists on the importance of the historical development of productive power. "Labour is organized and divided differently according to the instruments at its disposal. The handmill supposes quite a different division of labour from that effected by the steam mill. It is flouting history to want to commence with the division of labour in general in order to come later to a specific instrument of production, machines. Machines are no more an economic category than could be the ox that draws the plough. Machines are merely a force of production. It is the modern workshop, which is based on the use of machinery, that constitutes a social productive relation, an economic category."

Proudhon's account of the origin of the mechanized workshop completely obscures that history of class struggle so important for Marx. Proudhon imagines a man making a bargain with equals to divide labour and work his machines, and subsequently gaining authority over

them by means of the wage system thus introduced. "Let us inquire," says Marx, "from the historical and economic point of view whether the workshop or the machine really introduced the *principle of authority* into society subsequently to the division of labour." Marx finds that the principle of authority in the factory and in society as a whole obeys different laws. In the factory there is a minute division of labour under the authority of the employer. In society as a whole industry is abandoned to unregulated competition. These extremes belong to the same stage of industrial development. "Authority within the workshop and authority in society are, in respect of the division of labour, in inverse ratio to one another."

"One of the most indispensable conditions," continues Marx, "for the formation of manufacturing industry was the accumulation of capital, facilitated by the discovery of America and the introduction of its precious metals." The increase in the means of exchange resulted in a depreciation of wages and ground-rents and an increase of individual profits. So feudal landowners and the workers were together depressed and the bourgeoisie rose. But there were other factors: "the increase of commodities thrown into circulation from the time commerce penetrated East India by way of the Cape of Good Hope, the colonial system, the development of sea-borne commerce." There was also the dissolution of bands of retainers at the close of the feudal period with the consequent growth of a whole vagabond class from which cheap labour was subsequently acquired for the workshop. Vagabondage, "almost universal in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries," was further recruited from a peasantry dispossessed through the turning of arable land into pasture. "The

extension of the market, the accumulation of capital, the resultant modifications in the social position of classes, a multitude of persons finding themselves deprived of their sources of revenue, these are all so many historical conditions for the formation of manufacture. It was not, as M. Proudhon says, a friendly agreement between equals that assembled men in workshops."

But it is not only the historical error that Marx corrects. He finds in machinery itself something quite different from what Proudhon sees there. Machinery is for Proudhon the antithesis of division, reuniting the functions which the division of labour had separated. But, objects Marx, "the machine is a reunion of instruments of work, not a combination of tasks for the labourer himself." In fact "the concentration of the instruments of production is as inseparable from the division of labour as the concentration of public power is inseparable from the division of private interests," whereas "for M. Proudhon the concentration of instruments of labour is the negation of the division of labour."

So far from the mechanized workshop saving the labourer from the effects of the division of labour, Marx had only to mention the horrors of the English industrial revolution to show that it had done quite the opposite. But Proudhon admits that machines have their evil consequences—unemployment, for instance, and the subjection of the worker to the machine. He begins his fifth chapter: "Between the hundred-mouthed hydra of division of labour and the untamed dragon of machines, what is to become of humanity? A prophet told us more than two thousand years ago. . . . To preserve us from two evils, famine and pestilence, heaven sends us discord."

Competition is the next category. It, too, has its good and bad sides. The good of it is that it is necessary for the coming of equality. The bad side is that it produces just the opposite of what is intended by it. Proudhon insists on the necessity of competition. Without it there would be an immense relaxation of effort, if, for instance, work and wages were guaranteed by a decree to all. No doubt, is in effect Marx's reply, if you have nothing to offer but a decree. But Marx thinks that competition, though essential under the existing system, will be abolished by revolution. This will involve "a change from top to bottom of all conditions of industrial and political existence, and consequently of the whole way of life." To the objection that this would require an unprecedented transformation of human nature he replies that "history is nothing but a continual change of human nature."

The category which, according to Proudhon, is the antithesis to competition, or, if we like, the synthesis of the contradictions of competition, is monopoly. Marx congratulates Proudhon on his perception of what everybody knows, that modern monopoly is the outcome of competition; but, he adds, "we all know that competition was engendered by feudal monopoly. Therefore originally competition was the contrary of monopoly and not monopoly of competition. Therefore modern monopoly is not a simple antithesis; it is, on the contrary, the real synthesis. *Thesis:* feudal monopoly before competition. *Antithesis:* competition. *Synthesis:* modern monopoly, which is the negation of feudal monopoly in as much as it assumes the competitive régime, and is also the negation of competition inasmuch as it is monopoly." "This modern,

bourgeois monopoly is synthetic monopoly, the negation of the negation, the unity of contraries."

For Proudhon, however, it is different. He is obliged, at least so Marx interprets him, to regard both competition and monopoly as in essence good, since they are economic categories, emanations of "the impersonal reason of humanity." But in operation they are bad, and moreover they disagree with one another. The solution for this dilemma is taxation. Consumption must be taxed in order to restore equality. Marx, however, regards taxation on consumption as essentially a weapon of the bourgeoisie, of the "sober and economical wealth which maintains itself and reproduces itself and grows by the indirect exploitation of labour." It is a weapon against the "frivolous, joyous, prodigal riches of the *grands seigneurs* who do nothing but consume." And as to the *logical succession* of taxes, the balance of trade, credit—as Proudhon understands it—Marx will only observe that "the English bourgeoisie, having, under William of Orange, attained its political constitution, created at a stroke a new system of imposts, the public credit and the system of protective duties, so soon as it was in a position to develop freely the conditions of its existence."

Proudhon's category of property is further criticized. It is his eighth epoch and comes after credit. The kind of property meant is property in land. Credit is a form of fiction, so, to bring us back to reality in a solid shape, Proudhon introduces landed property. Marx has here merely to observe that "in the world of real production, landed property precedes credit."

The function of the landowner, in Proudhon's scheme, is to serve equality by taking from the tiller of the soil

the excess of its fertility over inferior soils. It is an egalitarian application of the Ricardian theory of rent corresponding to Proudhon's earlier egalitarian application of Ricardo's theory of value. According to Marx, Ricardian rent is landed property in the bourgeois or capitalist stage, "feudal property which has undergone the conditions of bourgeois production." The theory of Ricardo is completely true only of England, where agriculture has become a part of capitalism. "So far then from landed property in this sense attaching man to Nature, it attaches the exploitation of land to the competitive system." Marx considers Ricardo himself to have been in error here. "After having assumed bourgeois production as necessary for the determination of rent, Ricardo none the less applies it to all times and countries." It is one of the "errors of the economists, who represent the relations of bourgeois production as eternal categories."

Proudhon thinks not only that rent has an equalizing mission but that it is also a kind of interest, except that, whereas interest on industrial capital decreases with increasing production owing to the competition of investors, rent must increase because of the growing difference between the most fertile and the least fertile soils as inferior soils are brought progressively under cultivation. Marx denies that rent in its capacity of interest is any longer rent in the Ricardian sense. The law of Ricardo that rent increases with extended cultivation is true of the difference between the produce of different soils. The economic rent does increase. But the capitalist who invests his money in land is buying ground rents, and his investment obeys the law of competition. He will, in competition with other investors, bring the interest on

the capital thus invested to the level of the interest on capital anyhow invested. Indeed, the interest on capital invested in land is mostly a little lower than that on industrial capital, from the greater security of the investment.

Finally, Proudhon is against strikes and combinations of workers to raise wages; if successful they only increase wages and produce scarcity. This, he thinks, follows if only some of the workers get increased wages. If they all get increased wages and all have to pay more for goods the result is a fiasco. Marx only admits that of course if all wages were raised and all prices went up in proportion there would be only a nominal change. He maintains, however, that wages can be increased at the expense of profits. He does not admit that a rise of wages normally produces a rise of prices, since it hits least those industries that have a greater proportion of fixed capital. At any rate "in England strikes have regularly given rise to the invention and use of new machines." Though this effect of strikes produces unemployment it also makes for industrial progress. Proudhon thinks that English workers have abandoned strikes as useless. He quotes from a speech made, with general approval of a Bolton audience, by an English speaker to that effect. Marx expounds to him the system of "ticket meetings," where such applause can be procured at will by excluding all but foremen and other adherents of the employer. With Engels at his side Marx knew all about such places as Bolton and Manchester. Worker's combination necessarily follows capitalist development, and Marx claims that the repeal of the English combination acts was inevitable. He thought it equally inevitable that partial and temporary combination to raise wages should be followed, as it was in England,

by great, permanent unions. The trades union was, however, in his eyes, chiefly important as the instrument of class warfare and a preparation of the revolution. It is no longer a mere question of wages. "The English economists see with astonishment the workers sacrificing a large part of their wages for the sake of associations which, in the eyes of those economists, are established only for the sake of wages."

"Economic conditions had previously transformed the mass of the country into labourers. The domination of this capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class face to face with capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle . . . this mass is uniting itself, it is constituting itself as a class for itself. The interests which it defends are becoming those of a class. But the struggle of class with class is a political struggle."

"An oppressed class is the vital condition of every society founded on the antagonism of classes. The enfranchisement of this class implies necessarily the creation of a new society."

"Of all the instruments of production the greatest productive power is the revolutionary class itself. The organization of the revolutionary elements as class supposes the existence of all the productive forces which were able to be created within the bosom of the old society."

"The condition of the liberation of the working class is the abolition of all class."

"The labouring class will substitute, in the course of its development, for the old civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism, and there

will be no more political power properly speaking, since the political power properly speaking is precisely the official résumé of the antagonism within civil society."

"There is never a political movement which is not at the same time social. It is only in an order of things in which there shall be no more classes and antagonism of classes that social evolution will cease to mean political revolutions. Until then, on the eve of each reconstitution of society, the last word of social science will always be:

" 'Combat or death: sanguinary struggle or annihilation. It is thus that the question is invincibly stated.'

"(G. SAND.)"

CHAPTER XII

SOME REFLECTIONS

In the preceding pages we have travelled with Marx only a part of his journey. We have accompanied his expedition only a little way into the new country it was to explore. We are not qualified to estimate the value of its ultimate discoveries, but we wished to ascertain the equipment, the character and powers of the leader, the outlines of the unknown territory as it appeared from its limitary mountains at the moment when the general direction of the march could first be apprehended. Of its final success we do not here attempt to judge. But for whomsoever would do so a knowledge of the preparation, the preconceptions, the plans and the first guidance with which it was commenced must necessarily be of some use, and of these we have sought to give an account.

Marx was ambitious in the sense that he thought it the duty of every man to make the utmost of his powers for the benefit of humanity. There is in him no trace of the vanity of leadership, nor had he any of that indeterminate ambition which merely aims at high places with the vague intention of doing good in them. An attempt to seduce him at an apparently hopeless moment with the promise of an official career met with a contemptuous refusal. His immense vitality saved him from scepticism with regard to his mission.

The same impersonality and concentration of aim naturally affected his relations with others, but it did not prevent him from contracting warm friendships. The

stormy severances that have been so often noticed are counterbalanced by loyalties at least as remarkable. Though his pugnacity is undeniable, he was not without sympathy for sensitive natures, and when the revolutions of 1848–49 ended in disaster, no leader could have been more unsparing of himself in his efforts to save imperilled comrades than was Marx in his work for the victims of the famous trial at Cologne. Nor is there any need, after what has appeared in the writings reviewed in this book, to say any more about the passionate humanity which burned under his theories of society. Whoever approached social problems with a purely intellectual interest, it was not Marx.

Was he primarily philosopher, historian, economist, or man of action? At the point where we take leave of him his work in the last of these capacities had scarcely commenced. His work as a philosopher was not by himself summed up in a complete system. In 1837 he announced to his father that he had become a Hegelian. The whole of his subsequent thought is influenced by his early and complete assimilation of Hegelian ways of thinking. It meant, for one thing, that, as we saw in contrasting him with Proudhon, he never passed in his socialism through a utopian phase. It meant also that, even when he considered himself to have reached the polar opposite of Hegelianism, the laws obeyed by reality presented themselves to him in a dialectical form. But did he really achieve that reversal of the Hegelian system of which he spoke? Hegel's philosophy was a philosophy of the universe. Marx had perhaps no more than a philosophy of society. At the time when he fell under the influence of Feuerbach, who put man in the place of Absolute

Mind, Marx was already absorbed, or was about to be absorbed, in the study of social and political problems. Henceforward the social problem was to determine what philosophical questions he would ask himself. At least the exposition, if no more, of his philosophical basis, was limited to those parts of it involved in his criticism of society. The actual development of his thought almost makes his social philosophy a universal philosophy. It is, after all, of the nature of philosophy to be universal. If, on rejecting the Hegelian doctrine of Absolute Spirit, he had become a solipsistic idealist, we should not, whether we agreed with him or not, have denied that his thought claimed to be an explanation of the universe. That he conceived reality to be social and historical instead of individual does not of itself affect this claim. A philosophy of nature as well as of man is involved in solipsism, and also in the philosophy of Marx, if only by reason of the economic orientation of his social theory. Marx himself, so far as I know, never had occasion to make us clear on this point. Moreover society, as he conceived it, behaves in its dialectical movement very like Hegel's Absolute Spirit. But into metaphysical questions he did not further go. He did not probe the difficulties which Hegelians have, for instance, with the nature of time. For the purposes of his sociological science he could take time for granted. Nor did he discuss the subject of good and evil, though the implications of his philosophy with regard to this question have much interest. There is nothing against which he protested more clearly than the confusion of the ideal with the actual. The pages of the *Holy Family* are filled with this protest against "mystification." And if actual social humanity was the ultimate reality, it was in

many of its aspects evil enough. And yet the dialectical movement of history does in time for Marx what it does eternally for Hegel—restores the totality of good; in Marx's case reintegrates by the proletarian revolution that humanity which has been dehumanized in earlier stages of development. A question never far from the reader of Marx is whether he considered himself to have repudiated as much of Hegel as it is often assumed that he did, whether the universe was not always for him a logical unity, though he protested against taking the form for the substance and neglecting empirical verifications.

As an historian he keeps his feet on firm ground. He cannot be accused of construction *a priori* even if we do not always agree with his interpretation. Few will doubt his right to be considered one of the most important historical thinkers of all time. Whatever the limitations of the economic theory of history, at least since Marx the whole of human history has to be rewritten in the light of it. Adam Smith had shown the working of the economic factor in certain great historical events. Marx first showed the regularity and continuity of the economic factor in its interaction with the factors of politics, religion and philosophy.

The philosophical and historical theory of Marx can be seen approaching their mature form in the writings we have been studying. His economic theory can be profitably examined only in its more developed forms. He had certainly, before he wrote against Proudhon, made himself a master of the economic knowledge of his time and had begun the critical process that led to its reshaping in his mind, particularly in revealing the historical nature of economic categories.

Was human nature too, for Marx, an historical category? He certainly believed that human character and motives depended on social conditions, on class and on history. On the other hand he frequently writes of human nature with reference to a norm, to what it ought to be and will be after the proletarian revolution. In other words he appears to have absolute ethical values. Nothing, at least, is falser than to attribute to him a sordid psychology of selfish motivation. The economic man of the nineteenth century was in his eyes the condemnation of the nineteenth century. And he showed, especially in discussing the characters of Sue's romance, a very strong sense of the way in which the false ideals of an unjust social system, ideals that ignore the claims of normal impulse, result in disguising the crudest passions under moral pretence. In such studies in self-deception he has his part in a lore supposed of later date.

Above all it is well to remark his zeal for the freedom of the individual. No one can read his successive utterances, from the articles on the censorship, or even from the dissertation on Epicurus, down to the writings of 1847, without seeing that the idea of freedom was the breath of his inspiration. The root of all evil is the control exercised by the productive system, by industry, division of labour, by competition and private property over human beings. Neither buyer nor seller is free and the class struggle must always be a political struggle, but when the victory is won the state will disappear. It was only as to the process, not as to the goal, that Marx differed from the anarchists. And so he perhaps linked utopia to history. And he is one of the great humanists. He sees in the revolutionary proletarian the representative

of mankind. The word he has for him is that of Virgil to Dante:

> Libero, dritto e sano è tuo arbitrio,
> e fallo fora non fare a suo senno:
> per ch'io te sopra te corono e mitrio.

NOTES

1. TREITZSCHKE: Deutsche geschichte, IV, 612.
2. Cf., for a different view, CORNU: Karl Marx, L'homme et L'œuvre, p. 127: ". . . et par delà Epicure, il critiquait. B. Bauer et les Jeunes Hégéliens."
3. Anmerkungen zu Teil I, cap. 4.
4. G. MAYER: Die Anfänge des Politischen Radikalismus im Vormärzlichen Preussen, pp. 3 ff.
5. NICOLAIEVSKY and MAENCHEN-HELFEN: Karl Marx, Man and Fighter, p. 57.
6. For an exhaustive and penetrating study of the influence of Feuerbach on Marx and his circle, see S. RAWIDOWICZ: Ludwig Feuerbach's Philosophie; Ursprung and Schicksal.
7. ADORATSKIJ in Gesamtausgabe, Vol. V, p. 518.
8. Letter to Bebel in 1885, quoted by ADORATSKIJ in Gesamtausgabe, Vol. V, p. xvii.
9. MARX ET PROUDHON in À la lumière du Marxisme, Vol. II, p. 210.

APPENDIX

The reader may be glad of the following very short list of books, to most of which the author acknowledges some indebtedness.

FRANZ MEHRING: Karl Marx, The Story of his Life. The English translation (1936) by Edward Fitzgerald contains an appendix utilizing recent research (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.)

NICOLAIEVSKY AND MAENCHEN-HELFEN: Karl Marx, Man and Fighter (1936).

SIDNEY HOOK: From Hegel to Marx (1936).

AUGUSTE CORNU: Moses Hess et la Gauche Hégélienne (1936).
Karl Marx, L'homme et L'œuvre 1818–1845 (1934).

ARMAND CUVILLIER: Marx et Proudhon in À la Lumière du Marxisme, tome II (1937).

C. BOUGLÉ: Socialismes Français (1933).

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J. MIDDLETON MURRY, JOHN MACMURRAY, N. A. HOLDAWAY, G. D. H. COLE: Marxism (1935).

F. ARMANDE ET R. MAUBLANC: Fourier (1937).

BENEDETTO CROCE: Historical Materialism and the Economics of Karl Marx (English by C. M. Meredith with an introduction by A. D. Lindsay, 1913, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.)

V. I. LENIN: Marx, Engels, Marxisme (1935).

A. LABRIOLA: Karl Marx, L'Economiste, Le Socialiste (traduit par E. Berth, Preface de Georges Sorel (1909)).

MANDELL MORTON BOBER: Karl Marx's Interpretation of History (1927).

CHARLES ANDLER: Le Manifeste Comuniste de Karl Marx et F. Engels, Introduction Historique et Commentaire.

HEINRICH LEVY-KOREF: Karl Marx and Hegel (1925).

S. RAWIDOWICZ: Ludwig Feuerbachs Philosophie; Ursprung und Schicksal.

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